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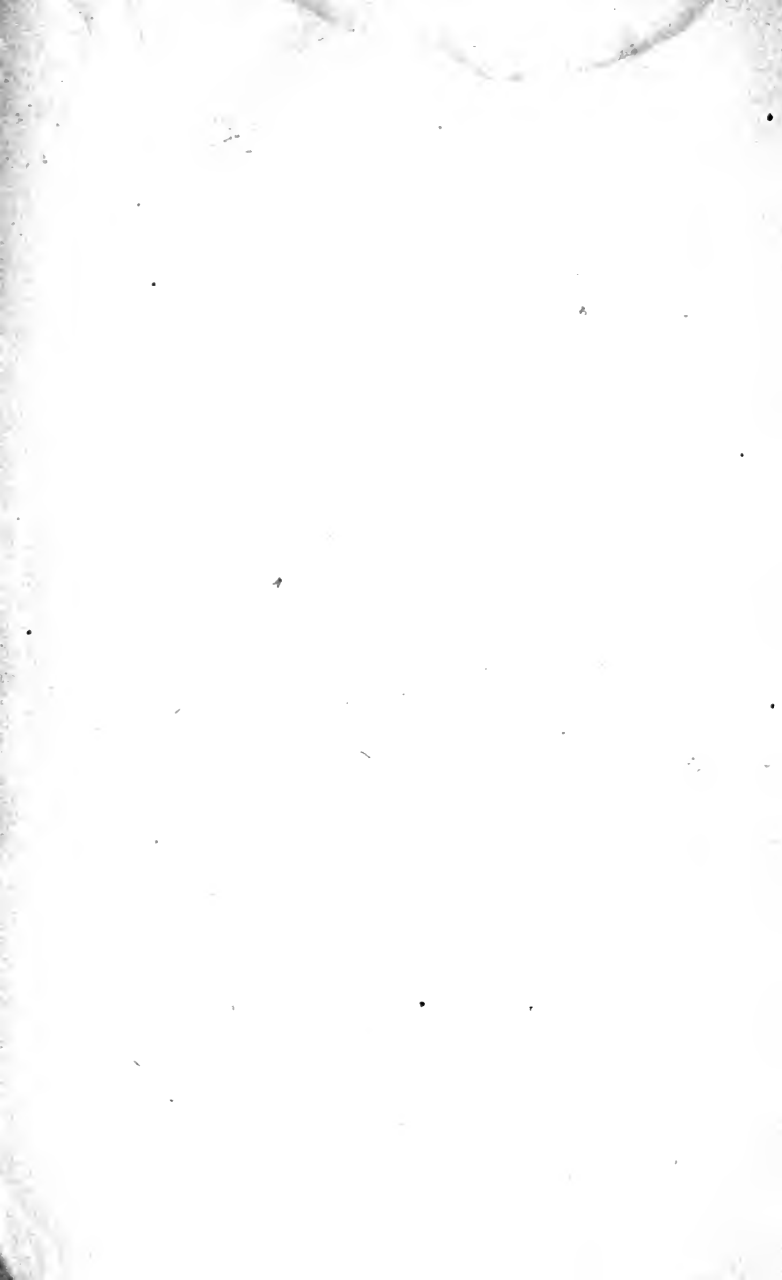


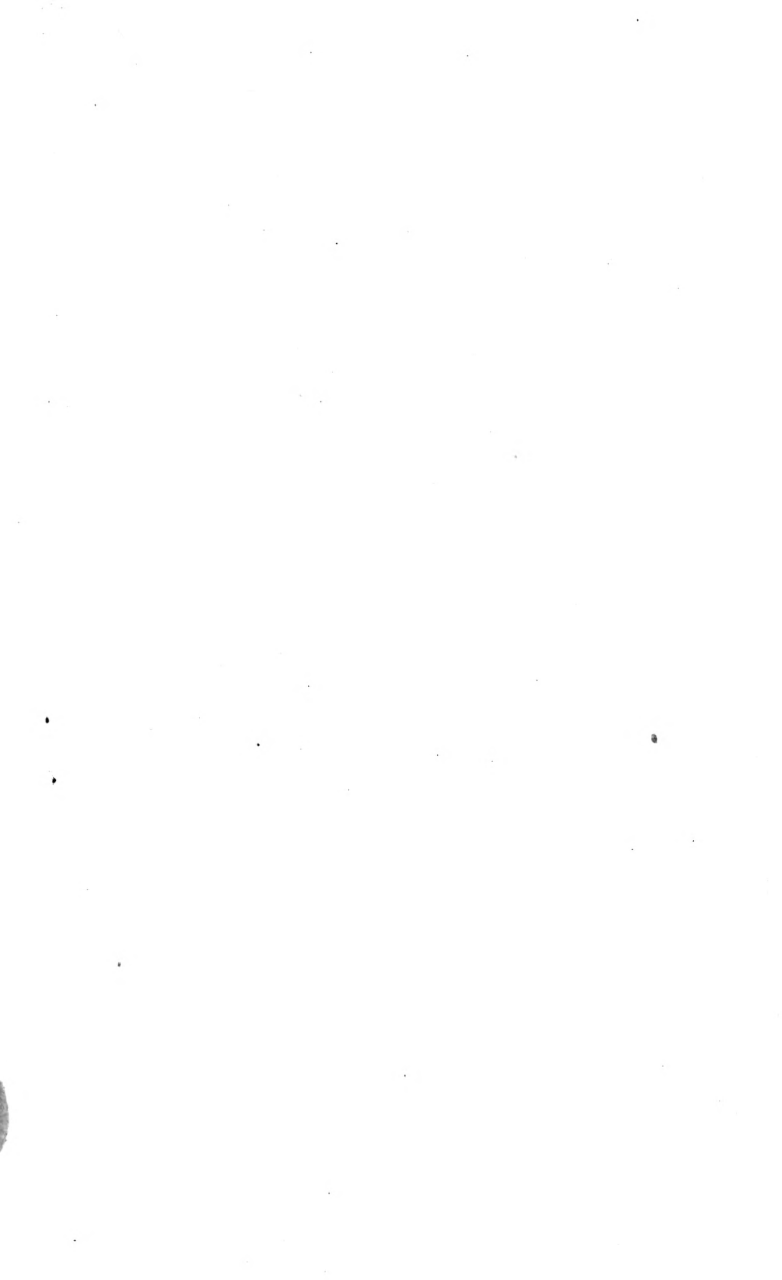
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Bradford
Ohio

March 5th
1864





RENSHAWE.

A Novel.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "MARY BRANDEGEE."

EDITED BY

CUYLER PINE.



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TO

MY FATHER.

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P R E F A C E.

AXIOMS and plain principles ought to be repeated once at least in a generation.

In each man's history there was a time when platitudes were novel-ties, and our weariness of them leads us to take for granted, that the rising race will learn what is not taught.

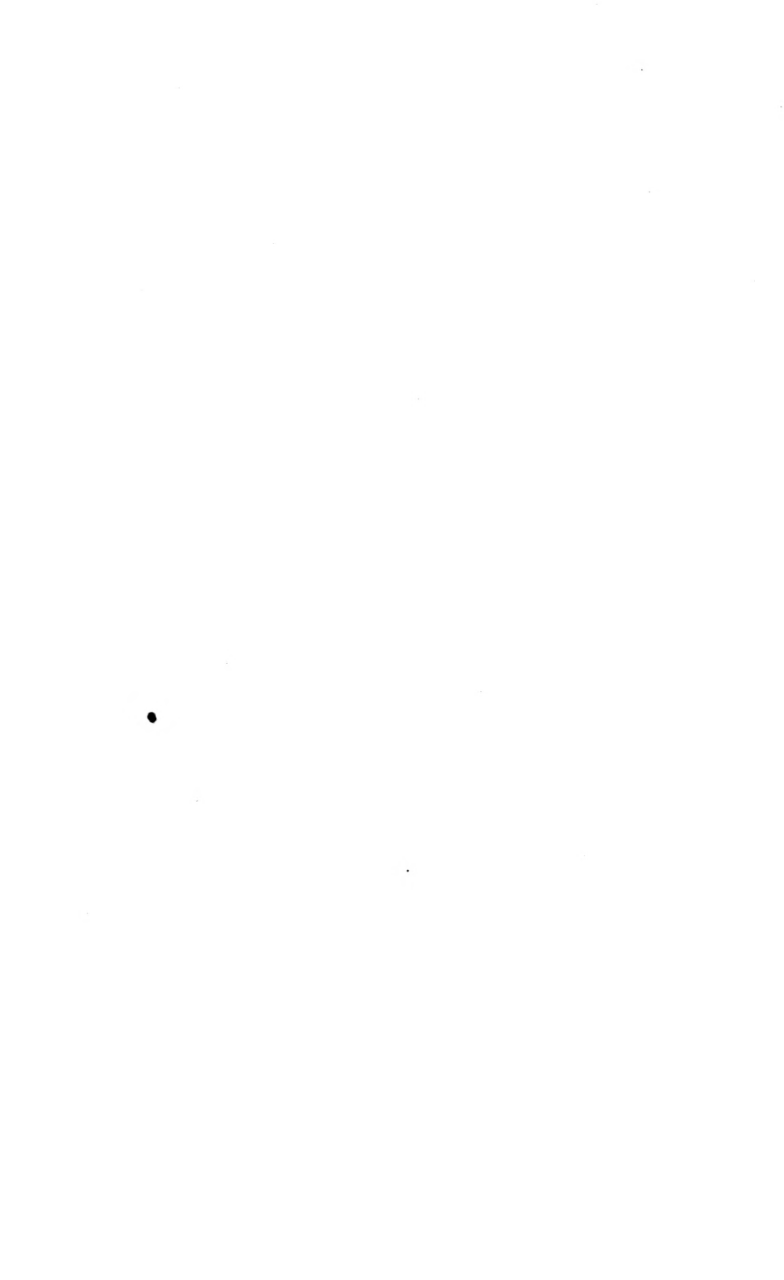
Some, it is true, mankind is in no danger of forgetting, but there are others, which the force of circumstances sweeps very far out of sight, and it is then that those who remember them should come to the rescue. One of these truisms, which has been much endangered lately, in this country, is that good and evil are confined to no society, and are indigenous to no soil.

That bad men have fallen in a good cause is a fact which its devotees are disposed to ignore, and that good men have suffered in a bad cause, they are still less willing to acknowledge.

There are men too ready to pronounce on the convictions, principles and merit of others whom they have never even seen, and throughout this whole country there are also many who, reasonable and just in themselves, have been unintentionally swayed by the misrepresentations of passion, blind to what it does not wish to see, to condemn individuals together with nations.

Before this latter class I lay these memoirs of my sister. If in any one case they serve as a reminder of the simple fact which all men who dwell in peace are ready to acknowledge, the task of their preparation will not have been in vain.

CUYLER PINE.



RENSHAWE.

I.

BLUE HILLS.

Netted in a silver mist
Were cottage chimneys smoking from the woods,
And cattle grazing in the watered vales.—MRS. BROWNING.

CHAPTER I.

THERE was no railway station at Blue Hills, and I came to that respectable hamlet by stage from the nearest depot, six miles distant. As it was the only stage that ran during the day, I was a little surprised on finding no one to meet me at the terminus of its route, yet nowise daunted by this circumstance, after discovering that Mr. Shaker's house was within a mile, I set out for that habitation, leaving my baggage at the stage-house. This was principally one trunk.

Darkness overtook me on the way, and I regretted that I had not availed myself of the stage driver's offer to return for me to the stage house after some other errands had been disposed of. As the directions given me had led me to expect, the more populous features of the village ceased with the first half mile of my walk.

I had been charged to stop at the third house after passing the liberty-pole; but as three roads met there, and as I was in doubt which of two I should have followed, I paused for some minutes before venturing to enter, when I had reached the third gateway. A wooden fence shut in a square inclosure about one acre in area, in the centre of which the house stood out in the beams of the half moon. It was a building picturesque in original design, all angles and gables, dormer windows, and tall red brick chimneys, but old, faded, and dingy, and the outhouses, of which there was a goodly row, presented an appearance more unmistakably attributable to neglect of repairs.

There was nothing cheering in a nearer view of the premises. The upper windows were not illuminated, nor was there any sign of life visible about the place, except when a disabled dog crawled out of a crazy-looking kennel to whine feebly at my approach. At last, detecting a gleam through the close grating of a basement window, I ventured an energetic summons with the knocker of the only door that was visible on the front.

"Does Mr. Shaker live here?" I asked, half expecting a negative, when the door was opened by a stout, hard-featured woman, about middle age, enveloped in a bonnet and shawl.

I was told that Mr. Shaker lived there, and was invited to walk in. The hall was commodious, and furnished in a quaint, old-fashioned style; a huge red clock ticked at the farther end, and by the dim light I caught the outline of several pictures in very ancient frames on the walls. I lost no time in looking round, however, as the woman who had admitted me, and who proved to be Mr. Shaker's housekeeper, informed me, to my great concern, that Mr. Shaker himself had gone away, and although he and several ladies had been

expected, that though in fact she had been "looking for them" every day, I was the first of the party to arrive. His orders to her had been to make his guests as comfortable as possible until his arrival.

"But Mr. Shaker's niece—the mistress, is at home, is she not?" I asked, dubiously.

"Miss Launey, that is. She ain't no mistress."

"And who is the mistress, then?"

Mrs. Judson, which I learned was the housekeeper's name, immediately stated that there was no mistress, only as far as she served for one; for that matter there was no master either, as Mr. Shaker was good for nothing but to sit in his study and pore over books. He had invited his niece, to be sure, to keep the ladies company, but as for mistress, Miss Launey didn't know the blue China tea-set from a pair of tongs. The place altogether had been going to rack and ruin as fast as it could, and except that she had driven things as well as she could, the house would have been burnt up for kindling-wood.

"I expected to find Miss Launey here, of course," I said, in no little annoyance; "I hardly know what to do."

The housekeeper, with a look directed askance from under her heavy brows, stated she saw nothing else to be done but to make myself "to hum," and she would provide my supper. She alleged that during Mr. Shaker's absence, she merely visited the premises during the day to attend to the wants of the man-servant, and she was on the point of going to her mother's cot, about three miles above in the woods, when I arrived. As Miss Launey was with a feeble relative at Rocky Cross, she could be readily notified in the morning that Mr. Shaker's guest had come; but she did not think Mr. Shaker himself would return very soon, as, being opposed to rail-

roads, on the ground that they were new-fashioned and unsafe, he always traveled by slow stages in his carriage.

"But he cannot have been six weeks in coming from New York," said I.

Mrs. Judson thought it likely. In any village where there was a library or a bookstore he sometimes stopped three days or more, and frequently accomplished only five miles a day.

Leaving me to digest this announcement, Mrs. Judson prepared a hasty supper, and dispatched Mr. Shaker's man with the dog to the station for my luggage. I suggested that she should send him also to her mother's cottage to explain Mrs. Judson's non-appearance, but the housekeeper assured me that her mother was aware that company was expected at Mr. Shaker's, and would easily account for the detention. Besides that "feller," as she denominated the envoy, was so slow a poke that he would not get over the three miles till sunrise.

The event seemed fully to justify Mrs. Judson's assertion; and after waiting till midnight for the return of the messenger, I began to indulge in a few apprehensions regarding his safety.

"Times is so unsettled now," remarked Mrs. Judson in reply to one of these surmises, and there's reely so little tellin' what's goin' to happen, with the woods all full of prowlin' thieves and sich, that if it was anybody else 'cept Sing'lar Twist, (Sing'lar Twist's his name,) who went out and staid till middle of the night I *shud* feel consarned. But I know Sing'lar—he'll be along byme by. Mr. Shaker likes slow folks."

I felt less sympathy with Mr. Shaker's preference in this respect, on the present occasion, than might have been the case had I been less interested in Singular Twist's expedition. Before one in the morning the whine of the dog announced his return, and the creak of the

wheelbarrow, which was taking it leisurely up to the door, gave intimation that my luggage had arrived. But there was no more than one small valise and a band-box, Mr. Twist reporting that he intended going back for the trunk, which, though the stage-office was locked, had been left, by his urgent entreaty, outside the door.

"And ain't you ashamed," said Mrs. Judson, in a tone of severity, "to be five hours goin' three-quarters of a mile to fetch a band-box!—and tole 'em to leave the trunk out-doors in a village! Shockin'! Go back as quick as you can, you fool."

"'Spos'n it's got stole," suggested Singular.

"Then you'll hev to pay for the vallyables, no sayin' how much—may take all you're wuth."

Singular's ideas seemed roused by this prospect, and he departed with greater alacrity than he had come. Mrs. Judson bolted the doors and secured the windows, assuring me that there was no chance of Singular's return before the time she was usually up. Owing to the lateness of our vigil, however, we overslept in the morning, and finding, on awaking, that the sun was well up in the sky, I hurried to dress and went in quest of the house-keeper to know whether there were any tidings of Twist and my trunk. Mrs. Judson was just unbarring the window, and to my inquiries she replied by pointing grimly to the lawn where Singular lay fast asleep, with the dog's nose on his breast, beside the empty wheelbarrow.

"You can make him pay for every stitch thar wus in it," she said to me forcibly. "He's got piles of money in Mr. Shaker's desk, and no sayin' how much in the bank—been hoardin' it up for twenty years. Reg'lar mean, miserable miser."

As Singular, fast in the embrace of Morpheus, was totally deaf to any admonitions from the window, Mrs. Judson went down to arouse him to an explanation. Her

efforts were, for some time, unavailing. At last, when Mrs. Judson had repeatedly shouted, "Whar's that trunk?" and Singular had replied as often, "Well," in the drowsiest of voices, Mrs. Judson resorted to more energetic measures. Roused to consciousness by a severe thump on the shoulder and pull on the collar, Singular made known, rubbing his eyes and gaping desperately, that the trunk had been taken by mistake in the six o'clock stage to Rocky Cross, a depot ten miles distant, to meet the nine o'clock train.

"And what in sense was you doin'?" shouted Mrs. Judson, "to be till six o'clock trundlin' a wheelbarry down to the stage-house! Whar wus it you stopped? Come, I will know."

Singular with vehemence protested he "hadn't stopped nowhar—nawthen open to stop at arter twelve o'clock. Thort the dog was tired—felt tired himself—s'posed he'd fell asleep, like anybody natterally would when it got so nigh mornin'! When he got to the station the stage had gone and took the trunk, and he had come home direct—not having stopped at all."

"Oh, yes," cried the wrathful Judson, "I don't doubt you come *hum* on a trot. You're allus a shuttin' the stable door arter the hoss is stolen. Shed hev thort you'd hev known enough, Sing'lar,—that stage allus is a catchin' everything that's lyin' round. Now, then, you've just got to get out the long wagin and go up to Rocky Cross arter that trunk, do you hear? Come, Sing'lar, go hunt Gusty and harness him up. Ef you can catch the nine o'clock train, all the better."

"Couldn't ketch a train nohow!" said Singular, appalled. "Can't ketch the hoss without help. Gusty's a drefful onruly critter,—bites and kicks."

"You'll hev that hoss harnessed, Sing'lar, or I'll know the reason why," said Mrs. Judson—a threat that was

not without its effect on "Sing'lar," who ruefully dragged himself into the house, and up to the third story, to see what lot the horse was in. Mrs. Judson, in the mean time, prepared breakfast, harnessed Gusty to the box-wagon, while Twist made his meal, and urged that individual, in spite of his protestations, to unusual briskness.

He was off at last, armed with my initials on a card, and a charge to drive rapidly. Mrs. Judson and I breakfasted, after his departure, in the so-called "back sitting-room," the more comfortable and commodious apartment in the house, exulting in two neatly painted corner closets, a newly woven rag carpet on the floor, and the walls papered smoothly. The furniture was covered with chintz, less for protection than ornament, and the curtains matched these coverings in hue, at the east and west windows of the oblong apartment. The hills, from which the hamlet took its name, rose in full view from the open windows, the soft clouds floating away from their summits giving promise of a lovely day. Mrs. Judson entertained me with the history of the engravings that adorned the walls, as well as of a few clay images in keeping with the statues in Mr. Shaker's study. Her chief pride, however, plainly lay in the set of deep-blue china that contrasted with the damask tablecloth.

Just as we had finished breakfast, a sound of wheels called Mrs. Judson's attention to the window.

"Thar's Sing'lar Twist comin' back! crawlin' along as usual. He's forgot somethin' of course."

Nothing had been forgotten, as was manifest when Singular drove deliberately around to the barn, and in the course of time was found to be releasing Gusty from the traces.

"What's the matter?" hallooed Mrs. Judson from the door.

"Broke down," announced the oracle.

"Goodness! he's broke down!" She hied directly to the stables, and I followed within hearing distance.

"What wus it, Sing'lar? Axle-tree broke, or wheel orf, or what?"

"Bolt come out!" shouted Twist.

"Bolt? why on airth didn't you screw it in, an' go on agin?"

"'Cause, lost it out. Ben looken for it all 'long the road for a mile."

"Well, hold on, Sing'lar, take the wagin to the blacksmith's; get him to make a new bolt. Come, you must git to Rocky Cross 'fore night."

Singular stood some time mute, with the harness in his hand. Blacksmith was full, he thought, but anyhow he'd run "down thar" and see when the repair could be executed.

"Run!" exclaimed Mrs. Judson, "never done sech a thing in his life. I'm afear'd you won't see yer trunk to-day, Miss Renshawe, at this rate."

Singular did not return from the blacksmith's till broad noon. The blacksmith would not be at leisure till ten o'clock at night, when he promised to come up and screw in the bolt. Mrs. Judson sent Twist next to one of the neighbors, to borrow a wagon in the emergency.

His next appearance was about three in the afternoon, when he came in, sank on the settle like one overcome with exertion, and announced that there were only "women folks" at Garniss's; the men were all gone away, and the wagon house was locked.

I charged Mrs. Judson to defer the expedition till the morrow. As she was sure that the trunk was safe where it was, I thought it better to await the blacksmith's leisure, and let Singular proceed the next day in the conveyance that belonged to Mr. Shaker's own domicile.

The next morning Mrs. Judson had Gusty harnessed by sunrise, and dispatched Singular on his journey.

Shortly after breakfast the housekeeper announced to me that she would be obliged to leave for a few hours, to explain the present state of affairs to her mother, and to make a call among the hills, for the purpose of inquiring into the prolonged absence of a certain Sally Bunn, who had gone to see her sick mother, and who should have been home the previous day.

Not liking to be left alone in the house, I offered to accompany Mrs. Judson, and after locking up the house we set out together.

Everything about was in a dead calm, the sky unclouded, the air still, the very chirp of the peepers from the woods sounding lazily on the ear. The hills, which were the most striking feature in the surrounding scenery, rose in detached and irregular piles to the northward, the road winding along at the base. They extended in this direction for about two miles, when they sank into swells and undulating surfaces, covered with patches of woods, among whose budding branches a smoking chimney showed here and there a habitation. We passed a number of quiet farm-houses, where the signs of life were almost entirely confined to the chirp of a chicken sounding from the board fences, and the track of the ducks on the dirt heaps by the road. For the last mile the road pursued its way without any protection of a fence, through stony and broken ground, which, Mrs. Judson said, it was not thought worth while to cultivate. A sudden turn of the road to the north, brought us in view of her mother's cottage. It stood at the junction of a cross-road with the highway, and was built on a side hill, on the top of which its western half was supported; the other half of the same floor, built over the foundation stones, inclosing an apartment that served apparently for a

kitchen. The structure fronted on the south, and after following the windings of the road among a wilderness of whortleberry bushes and straggling vines, on which the sun shone with the intense brightness of midsummer, we came near enough to perceive several horses standing about the yard, windows open, and a general bustle, in keeping with the volumes of smoke issuing from the one chimney.

"I wonder what's afoot now!" exclaimed my companion, and she pushed her way directly through the lower door, I following. Unmistakable signs of confusion were apparent there; a table stood in the middle of the floor, on which several hens were devouring the remains of a plentiful feast, clucking sociably among themselves; and through the open milk-room door several cats were visible, prowling about the shelves. Mrs. Judson hurried to drive them out, an operation involving the demolition of much crockery, and the downfall of a pan of milk, and I just had time to announce the appearance of an old woman bringing up a load of sticks from the well-path, when two men ran tumultuously down the step ladder communicating with the upper floor.

The youths—for neither could have been more than seventeen or eighteen years of age—wore the dress of the New York Fire Zouaves, and presented faces which it needed no second glance to discover as those of beings already hardened in iniquity. The impression was confirmed, when, after a short scrutiny, they walked up to me with the request that I would unglove and show my rings.

I at once complied, and made it clear that I had no rings whatever, while Mrs. Judson expressed her opinion that such young men as they might be in better business, and that the war would ruin the country. In the mean time my watch had been demanded, and seeing no alter-

native but submission, I quietly detached and surrendered it.

Without stopping to ask for our purses, the abandoned wretches were out of the door, and scampered away on the northward road just as the old woman made her entrée into the kitchen. She was full of trouble, and in a hurried, cracked voice, gave us a complete account of her trials. She had been toiling and cooking for five men who had eaten her out of house and home, brought horses and saddles, and it was all she could do to prevent them from making a stable of the kitchen.

Mrs. Judson fully sympathized with these woes, and after a long condolence, it was finally settled that she should proceed to Bunn's cottage alone, as it was in the recesses of the woods below, and that I should await Singular Twist's return from Rocky Cross, in order to ride down with safety. The old woman thought this much the better plan. None of the "swarrows," as she denominated the Zouaves, would be back before night, and she thought I would be safer there than anywhere until his arrival.

Mrs. Judson had just moved toward the gate, and I was still cherishing a half-formed design to call her back, when her astonished pause brought her mother and myself at once to her side. A vehicle came rattling down the road, surmounted by several red caps scintillating in the sunlight.

"Thar's Sing'lar Twist a-comin'!" exclaimed the old woman, "and good hevings! what has he got in with him!—all them red caps and shirts a-comin' back agin."

"I don't see Sing'lar nowhars," exclaimed the house-keeper. "Hope they hev'n't pitched him out, nor drowned him."

The box-wagon, in the mean time, drew up before the gate. It contained in all only four individuals, Singu-

lar's straw hat giving tokens of his presence, as he gradually raised himself from the bottom, his post of driver having been usurped by another of the party. The remaining three were men whom I had not seen before, that day at least. Two sprang out, followed by Singular, who descended at leisure, the driver still remaining on the seat. Then all came to a dead pause.

"Whar hev those fellers been robbin' this mornin'," demanded the tallest and most uncouth specimen of the party.

"They've done one piece of robbin' here," proclaimed Mrs. Judson; "took Miss Renshawe's watch, and kerried it orf."

Public attention thus called to me, the Zouaves asked at once for a description of the watch, and I gave it. They looked at each other, made some allusions to the "thieving devils," and declared they were glad to be rid of them.

"They stole my medal, Tomlin," said the shorter of these two Zouaves, turning towards the third individual, who lounged on the seat of the box-wagon.

"Yes," struck in the first questioner, "they stole his medal from he, and a bit of a red string that was round my neck. You seed 'em with it, 'Lisha, didn't you?"

"I seed it and more too," Elisha responded. "A man didn't dare to call his soul his own, for fear they'd snatch it."

"And his tobacccy-box," rejoined his comrade, whose name, I shortly learned, was Alancen. "The thievinnest rascals!"

In the meantime I had been scrutinizing that member of the party who still tenanted the box-wagon, and who had been addressed as Tomlin. There was nothing in his habiliments by which I could have judged him to be a member of any New York regiment, or indeed a soldier

at all. His hair was not cut according to the military fashion, as some dark-brown locks clustered about his jaunty cap. He wore a dark-blue flannel shirt, dingy black pantaloons, tucked into a pair of calf-skin boots, and in the broad leather belt encircling his waist were a bowie-knife and pair of pistols. A reckless expression characterized his upward glance, but otherwise his face was not unprepossessing, yet I was further mystified when, after close attention to the evidence, he drew my watch from his side pocket, looked at it inside and out, and looked around at me. I moved forward, but the Zouave, Alancen, blocked the gateway.

“Stand aside, ‘Lance,” said Tomlin, “and let the——” Here his eye ran over my characteristic outer woman, “lady pass.”

Alancen moved away, and I identified and received my own property, congratulating myself on my good fortune, and expressing my sense of indebtedness to Mr. Tomlin. In the meantime Singular Twist and Mrs. Judson were discussing Rocky Cross. I had heard the housekeeper demanding, “Whar’s that trunk?” and Singular’s prolonged hemming and hawing before Tomlin called off my attention; but the courtesies between us were but just exchanged as Singular entered upon his narrative. Rocky Cross was full of soldiers, and he didn’t dare to go anywhere near it, that was a fact. He could not tell whether they were few or many, whether they were United States soldiers, or rebels, whether their uniforms were black or white. He had not seen them, but had been informed by people in the vicinity, who had warned him to go no nearer lest he might not get away.

Mrs. Judson, little affected by this news, charged Singular to take Miss Renshawe home directly in the wagon, while she went across to Mrs. Bunn’s. The rest of the company were housed already in the cottage, and

a wrangling conversation about the dinner ensued between the Zouaves and the old woman, while I took my place in the box wagon, waiting anxiously for Singular, who, having once gone in, I might have expected would not reappear very soon.

When my patience was nearly worn out, "Lance" brought out a message that Singular did not feel well, and wanted to know whether I very much minded waiting until he had been strengthened by something to eat.

I entered the cottage at once to charge Singular with my haste to be home, but I found Twist obstinate. He was powerful hungry—had ridden pretty near all the way to Rocky Cross, been nearly scared to death by bad news, and the three passengers he had taken in had really driven Gusty on a regular trot for a mile. Gusty would drop before we got home, if he started off again now—horse was spavined in the left hind leg, and had the heaves every winter till grass came.

"I will walk down, Singular, in that case," I said, severely.

Singular, quite unmoved, rejoined, "Wall," and turned serenely to the table. Tomlin, who had overheard the discourse, interposed directly. "Very unsafe," he pronounced, "for any one, especially an unprotected female, to walk alone so far as Blue Hills. The young lady had better wait till after dinner, and ride down in the box-wagon."

Submission still appearing to be my forte, I sat down by the cooking-stove while the two Zouaves and Singular discussed their dinner. In the meantime Mr. Tomlin brought a chair and sat down by me, talking in a very encouraging strain, though sometimes I fancied rather too free in expressing his curiosity about matters that did not concern him.

The Zouaves made a long meal of it, a delay which my

impatience could ill bear; but Singular loitered over the table long after they had left it. Tomlin's conversation with me had come to an end, and I had been sitting watching Singular with growing indignation. When I perceived that Mrs. Judson had been gone an hour and a half, I was moved to tell Twist of the wrath his conduct inspired.

"Got all day to go hum," said he, coolly. Seeing that it did not avail to be angry, I grew more composed, but it was four o'clock in the afternoon before Twist had fairly finished his second pipe, and took up his straw hat, which was not bent straight under five minutes.

A halloo at the gate brought us to the door. There was a young man there on horseback with news from Blue Hills. A regiment of soldiers had come in, were to be quartered around at the different houses,—rebels of the blackest dye,—had pulled down three flags in the village, one off the church, one off the town-house, and one off the store, and had put up three rebel flags in their place. Blue Hills was, on the whole, loyal, at least outwardly, and the event had caused much commotion. The messenger had been asked to inquire what had become of Singular Twist and the lady under his charge; Mrs. Judson was afraid some accident had taken place.

While I stood at the gate waiting for Singular, who had gone back for his hat, Tomlin came up to me to inquire what means of defence I had in case the troop in question were to offer any injury to the house, or proceed in the usual summary method with the stock and provisions of the place. I answered that the house was not susceptible of fortification, and I doubted if there were even an old musket to be found there.

Tomlin replied that defences of that sort he was aware would be ineffectual enough; he was about to offer me a paper signed by an official whose name would carry

weight with those Southern officers who recognized it.

I said immediately that I would be very thankful to receive any such safeguard, and Tomlin took from his pocketbook a printed form with a signature.

"What's the name?"

"Allan Shaker," I answered. Tomlin filled in two spaces, and handed the document to me. It was an injunction to the Confederate soldiers to refrain from molesting the property of Allan Shaker at Blue Hills, and was signed "Killian G. Chives."

"That's the last one I have," he said, "I have made them do some little good about the country, especially among the absolutely defenceless."

I thanked the author of these acts of philanthropy, half inclined to look upon him as another Don Quixote. Singular at last emerged with his hat, and said he would untie Gusty, and take me home.

"For another word of caution," said Tomlin, as Twist paused to fill his pipe again from Alancen's tobacco-box, "if there is any sort of liquor in your cellar, draw the taps and let it run off. It would be gone before night in some way; and if the soldiers get hold of it, as they will, you'll find the premises noisy till morning."


"It would be gone before night in some way," chimed in one of the two Zouaves, whose attention had been caught by the last observation, "so you might as well roll it off in the woods, and let us take care of it."

Tomlin now took Singular aside for a moment, while the old woman engaged me in a parting message to Mrs. Judson. We were off, not without some difficulty, Singular being so irresistibly drawn towards Tomlin, who had just made him the happy owner of a gold-piece, that it seemed a matter of life and death to get him away. His last words, several times repeated, were, "I'll do it,

my dear sir—depend on me—I'll be thar—get up, Gusty," and at last we drove away.

For the three miles of our journey, the conversation, which was by no means brisk, (Singular's ideas being quite as slow as his motions,) was divided between his fear of going home and my haste to get there. The slightest disposition on Gusty's part to go at a tolerable pace was immediately checked by Twist, who alleged that the horse, having already traveled ten miles in two hours and a half, and one mile on a trot was almost done over for the day. It was only when the appearance of a red shirt in a neighboring field aroused my alarm at the remembrance of my morning's adventure, that I took the reins myself, and suffered the horse to follow his own inclinations, by which movement our entrance into the village was effected with comparative speed.

CHAPTER II.

RS. JUDSON was just getting tea in the sitting-room when I returned, while a stout young damsel, who answered to the name of Sally, flew around in obedience to her energetic orders.

"Light up, Sally, don't you see how dark it's gettin'?" said the matron, while Sally ran for matches. "Oh, there's Miss Renshawe. I'm glad you've got back. I heered you wus a-comin' with Sing'lar more'n an hour ago. Mr. Shaker's back—come hum this arternoon with his books—onpilin' 'em up stairs."

"Mr. Shaker! how fortunate!" As I was leaving the room I was stopped by some drapery over a chair. "What's this, Mrs. Judson?"

Mrs. Judson seemed embarrassed by the query: "Sally

and I wus makin' a flag. As Mr. Shaker's old, and Sing-lar's no pertection, I thort there'd be no hurt in hev'in' this."

"This is a strange flag," I remarked, as I gazed at the unfamiliar combination of colors. "Did Mr. Shaker wish it made?"

But the housekeeper banished the emblem to the closet, and changed the subject. I found Mr. Shaker in his library, and after the greetings, which were warm on both sides, I hastened to speak of the danger which menaced the village. Strangely enough, Mr. Shaker seemed little affected by it. I was forced to hold up the most alarming picture.

"My dear sir," I exclaimed, "if they burn down your house, your library will be destroyed, and you rendered helpless."

"They won't destroy my library, child, or burn my house," said Mr. Shaker, indifferently. "It's against the law to burn down houses,—they would be hung for arson, every one of them."

"But what law is regarded by soldiers?"

"I am older than you," replied Mr. Shaker, composedly, ranging a set of Cicero's complete works on the shelves, "and I am mistaken if there be not some law among us yet. However, if you think it advisable, I'll walk down to the village and make some inquiry into what is going forward."

Arrayed in great-coat and hat, Mr. Shaker sallied forth.

Mrs. Judson looked after him dubiously, and Sing-lar followed him to the gate with a rusty old musket, which he refused to take. As whatever unpleasant demonstrations that had been expected were, to all appearances, delayed, the housekeeper grew calmer in soul, and less taciturn as her fears wore off.

The sun had not long been down before the house-

keeper came flying to my door with news. Mr. Shaker had come back—the regiment had proved to be nothing larger than a company, and Mr. Shaker had brought eight of the soldiers to stay all night at his house. Moreover, two officers were to take tea with Mr. Shaker, and he had sent up to desire my presence at the table.

“Two splendid gentlemen!” said Mrs. Judson, with enthusiasm, “and one of ’em’s so tall he stooped down comin’ in the door. I’ve only seen their backs yet—I was fetchin’ wood when they come.”

“Then how do you know they are so splendid?” said I, laughing.

“Couldn’t swear to it, but Mr. Shaker was fetchin’ ’em along as if he thort somethen of ’em.”

Soon after, Mr. Shaker came up to set my mind at ease about the late arrivals. They were not rebels at all—Northern men—death on rebellion and treason. The flags on church and store had come down by the hand of sexton and store-keeper, and had been lately restored. The captain and second lieutenant were Mr. Shaker’s guests for the night.

“Are they intelligent men, sir?” I inquired—“educated?”

Mr. Shaker shrugged his shoulders. “No—the lieutenant is an Italian, and has gone at the melodeon,—the other fellow—well, he might pass among Yankees.

As “Yankees” were a people whom Mr. Shaker held in special contempt, I could not hope much from his classification. I was, however, not altogether prepared, on my descent to the sitting-room, for so unmistakable a reminder of New England lower life as was presented in a tall, lank, awkward specimen of humanity, with very nasal utterance, fiery red hair, and pointed beard, exulting in the title of captain, and the prepossessing name of Good. Sure that I should discover about him nothing

better than his name, I turned to the lieutenant. His dark, plaintive face was more prepossessing, Mr. Shaker introduced him as Lieutenant Gallorda.

After tea, Mr. Shaker so entirely preferred the conversation of the junior officer, who certainly spoke English much better and more modestly than the captain, that the latter drew off by the table, where he devoted himself to a little drill-book, much to my relief, for I had been annoyed by the necessity of appearing at all, and was only anxious for the evening to close.

It was about nine o'clock when Singular Twist, appearing at the door, asked to speak to me. Glad to get out, I was in the hall directly.

"Miss Renshawe," said he, "them two lank-lookin', red-shirted fellers that rid with us to-day, are down to the lower eend of the garden, and wants to speak to you. They called one 'nother 'Lishe and 'Lance—said they wus in a terrible hurry."

"But how did they make you hear without alarming the sentinel?" I inquired.

"Cause I was on the lookout. T'other feller, Tomlin, said he was a-comin'. But he sent one of these fellers an hour ago, and he went cunjerin' up in the henroost arter eggs, an' the hens all flow'd out over his head, and the sent'nel hollered, and they chased him to the woods. Now they've both come—down at the nor'west corner of the garden, back of the quince bushes;—want to see you partic'larly."

"Did they give you no idea of their errand?"

"Nawthin' but both on 'em dead arter the cider-barrel. Tall un's got the most looney-lookin' eye I ever seed. Still, mebbe they hev got somethin' to say ye ought to hear. If 'tain't nawthin' wuth hearin' you can cum back agin."

"Where are the soldiers?"

"Supper, all on 'em. I ken come along, ef you want me to."

"Of course I want you to come along," I answered, "and be quick, for I shall not tarry there long." I wrapped my shawl about my shoulders, passed out of the house and hied to the quince bushes, Twist following at a slow gait and a respectful distance. I was met at the fence, as I had anticipated, by the two zouaves, whose sheathless bowie-knives and glittering caps the faint rays of moonlight made visible. Elisha was the first to speak.

"Tomlin told us to come down and find out," he said, "how every-thin' was sitooated round these quarters. he said the stoopid would meet us, but to send for you, for you'd be likely to know the most information. Wasn't that it, 'Lance?"

"About so as nigh as I ken recollect," said 'Lance. "What sort is it you've got here?"

"What am I to understand you wish to ask." I inquired. "That is, what has Mr. Tomlin sent you to find out?"

"He told us to find out all we could, and wants to know how many they be, and who they be, and who's the Colonel, and whar they come from, and whar they're goin' to, and two or three thousand things more."

"Fust of all," interposed the other zouave, "tell us if you tuk the taps out of yer barrels."

After a moment's consideration I said that the care of that had been left entirely to Singular.

"Well, we asked the stoopid, and he didn't know nothing about it," said the first zouave.

"So we kin kinclude that the stops are in the barrels," added the other.

"How are you to take back so much information to Mr. Tomlin?" said I. "You would be sure to forget some-

thing. If you had a pencil and paper you might make notes of what I tell you."

"I can't write a stroke," said Alancen, lugubriously.

"You might carry a note," I suggested.

But the ideas of both ambassadors were evidently more on the barrels than the news. "Ef you could only smuggle us round to the cellar, and give us a drink," said Alancen, "it would be doin' us both *sich* a kindness."

"I think," said I, "that the farther I keep you from the cellar the greater kindness it would be to both."

"Miss Shaker," returned Alancen, "it's not in my natur nor the natur of he to be tellin' folks what we've done for 'em, and ladies especially, but I must say that this is an ungrateful world. You do it benefits and it stings like a viper in its bosom. I don't know how much that ere watch was wuth that we took out of the exact jaws of death this mornin,' but ef it hadn't been wuth pickin' up, it couldn't hev been forgotten sooner, and the sarcumstances and so on. We wouldn't git tipsy to-night, not on no consideration, for Tomlin wants to hear about these ere sojers, an' he swore ef we didn't come back sober he'd take our heads off. So you see thar wouldn't anybody know it, and if we come to-morrer the sperrits will be all gone, for I've seen that ar woman run down five times into the cellar with a pitcher ever since I've been here, and that isn't more'n half an hour."

"No matter," said Elisha, "we can get a little su'thin' in the village, and mabbe it'll be better than there is here. You ort not to bother so, 'Lance. Tell us what crowd it is here, ma'am and we'll be off."

But for two reasons I hesitated. In the first place, the charge of ingratitude was not without its effect—in the second place, Alancen's mention of Tomlin's anxiety led me to pause in the consideration whether I would not

be guilty of imprudence in sending any information to a total stranger, of whom I knew nothing beyond that a paper signed by Killian G. Chives had been in his pocket. I therefore invited the two zouaves to come in, assuring them that the beverage they coveted would be in the supper-room, and as the house was occupied by Union soldiers they would be safe. But no. The Union soldiers might bother them with questions, or ask to see their passes, in which case I judged they would be in an awkward predicament; altogether they preferred the cellar to the supper-room. I bade them, therefore, follow me to the kitchen, where Mrs. Judson recognized them with a very black look.

After some parley they prevailed upon her to light them to the cellar, reminding her how they had rescued "Miss Shaker's" watch from the grasp of thieves; how they were Union soldiers, and how the cider was fast vanishing; there would soon be none left. Mrs. Judson appealed to me, and found that I feared disturbance and bloodshed and thought the zouaves would not go without the cider.

The housekeeper piloted them to the cellar, where they staid for some time. On coming up she whispered me that they had taken two or three bottles of wine in their pockets, and she had thought they would stay in the cellar all night. How they eluded the fresh sentinel, as the guard was just relieved, we did not care to investigate, only anxious to get them out of the house.

CHAPTER III.

BY eleven o'clock the house was comparatively still. Officers and men had sought repose, with the exception of the sentinel stationed at the garden paling, where his languid tread sounded with monotonous regularity on the path. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and rendered wakeful by the excitement of the day, I seated myself at the open window to gaze out at the neglected garden plants, fenced off from the straggling trees by a dilapidated rail fence, half lost among the row of spreading lilac and stunted quince trees.

I had been for some time watching the moving shadows of the trees and the scant clouds in the heavens, while the various sounds from the village, rendered indistinct in the distance, fell on my ear, when my attention was caught by the flash of a scarlet cap as it waved in the moonlight, directly behind the quince bushes. For some time this remained the only sign of life in that vicinity, until I perceived a figure moving up the path, from whose stooping shoulders, deliberate gait, and occasional full stop and stare, I saw that Singular Twist was approaching. The sentinel challenged him. Twist, pausing only to supply himself with a fresh tobacco chew, replied comprehensively, "it's me," and after offering his box to the soldier, entered the house. The sentinel walked leisurely up and down for a few turns, then took his seat on a stone at the eastern turning point, and rested his forehead on his gun, with a low sigh of weariness. I had but just observed this movement, when a cautious rap summoned me to the door.

Singular was without; he announced that "thar was a feller down at the quince bushes."

"Does he wish to see me?" I inquired, beginning to comprehend that a recurrence of these nocturnal summons might prove rather a nuisance than an advantage.

"Wants to see you powerful."

I asked whether it were one of the two previous messengers, or a stranger. Singular, however, had his instructions. Really it had been too dark to see.

I told Singular he need not follow, as Mrs. Judson was still below stairs employed with her extra work. A light in the officers' room, as I passed it, and voices within, apprised me that they had not yet gone to rest. I passed the door quietly and sought Mrs. Judson. We issued together into the moonlit yard, and, passing the sentinel, who looked round and said nothing, hastened down the garden walk. I never found any sentinel since so forbearing, and mention his conduct with consideration. I entered the shade of the quince trees with a beating heart. Mrs. Judson had stopped at a nest of Singular's tools, scattered about the proposed onion bed, and began gathering them up with some muttered animadversions against that individual. Heedless of these, I approached the rude fence and leaned over the rails. One human figure started up, indiscernible in the darkness, till he moved, and while I was resolving his identity, first into the zouave Elisha, and then into his more brusque companion, I was confronted by the slender form and clearly cut features of Tomlin himself.

"As a proof of how deeply I appreciate your politeness in coming," said he, "I shall detain you only so long as you can tell me what troop it is here, and whither they are bound."

"How can you expect a loyal woman, ignorant of your intentions, I may add, of your character, to answer questions for which you bring no authority, and offer no motive? You may be a thoroughly faithful soldier of your

country, or numbered among her foes. How am I to judge?"

"An investigation on your part is possible just now," rejoined Tomlin, "that is, should you not think it necessary to go beyond the present company. It is an impression of mine, that every man carries his credentials legible to every intelligent eye. If the test is unfailing, I do not fear the result." He took off his cap and turned his countenance to the full moon. "Now then, read; and when I assure you that in all my thoughts, hopes and wishes, I am a loyal son of the United States, find that in my face that says I lie."

The scrutiny was not so well repaid as Tomlin evidently expected, owing either to the want of better light, or to the deficiency of intelligence in my optics. The young man's face, though its expression was undeniably frank, wore a certain air of recklessness, which the uncertain light could not soften, nor the straightforwardness of his manner redeem. It was with a feeling of unconquerable hesitation that I bowed an acknowledgment of my readiness to comply.

"There is one company of soldiers stationed at Blue Hills," said I. "The regiment is on its way to Washington."

"So they are government troops?"

"Yes."

Tomlin grew reflective. "Going to Washington! which way?"

"Via Rocky Cross."

"And when do they move?"

"To-morrow morning. There is a regiment of Federal troops there, they say."

"They must not go to Rocky Cross," replied Tomlin. "The troops there belong to the Confederate army."

"What are they doing at Rocky Cross?"

"I don't know ; and I see no way of finding out between now and to-morrow morning."

"Send one of the zouaves to inquire," I suggested.

"I would, but Elisha is drunk in the woods yonder, and as Alancen cannot be found, I presume he is drunk somewhere else. I sent them down here first ; have you seen them ?

I detailed my interview with the zouaves in full. Tomlin expressed his astonishment that I should have facilitated their way to the cider barrel.

I owned that I disliked to appear ungrateful, that they had recovered my watch, which I valued as the gift of a near friend.

"They !" exclaimed Tomlin ; "who handed you that little article this morning, Miss Shaker ?"

"You, to be sure," I rejoined.

"Well, did you not believe the evidence of your senses against the claims of those foolish sots ? At all events you take a strange way to repay their services according to the moral view of the matter."

"Certainly, I should not have done it," said I, "but I had no idea they would drink so much. I hope the evil extends no farther, and that no one's life or safety is endangered."

"I am sorry for the delay, but you may avert the consequences by taking to these officers a message from me. Tell Captain—what's the name ? Good ?—Tell Captain Good, then, that there is a regiment of Confederate soldiers at Rocky Cross. Advise him against taking that route to-morrow."

"And should he ask your name, Mr. Tomlin ?"

"Tell him the name, if you like. He won't know it."

"And you expect they will leave at once, don't you ?

Tomlin shook his head. "It seems," he rejoined, "that two men have been on the premises, drank half a

barrel of cider, carried off half a cask of wine, and robbed a henroost, and that a lady has conferred with two parties on the affairs of the nation, all without the knowledge or notice of these officers or their men. If not ignorant they must be as blind as bats. They are a slow set, madam, and what you tell them from me may produce no impression."

"I will report your message, sir," said I; "Good night."

"Good night." The zouave cap was lifted mechanically, and the speaker moved off. I waited till his retreating figure was lost in the darkness, before hastening back with Mrs. Judson to the house, where I summoned Mr. Gallorda, without loss of time, to listen to my revelation. I declared my high authority, mentioning even Tomlin's name, urged the fact that there were secessionists at Rocky Cross, begged that the soldiers would not think of moving in that direction on the following day. Lieutenant Gallorda preserved a dignified reticence, and after some deliberation sent for his superior officer. The captain came down, with a quill behind his ear and his drill book in his hand, and received my presentment of the case with pompous disdain.

He assured me I was no soldier at all, but a woman unacquainted with military affairs—a piece of unexpected information. He said he was captain of that company, and competent to take care of it. He did not believe my informant could be other than a spy, or at best, a loose floating character. He knew all about the regiment at Rocky Cross. It was a band of Union men—he intended to join them in the morning, and should go the direct road. He and his company would do well enough,—at all events, if he needed any advice or suggestions on my part, he would ask for them.

Mr. Gallorda was more gracious. He apologized for Captain Good's uncouthness of manner, and thanked me

for my kindness in imparting my information. I saw that it was valueless, and conscious that in giving the warning I had fully discharged my duty, I regained my room, to seek whatever rest my anxieties for the morrow would permit.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY the next morning the company of soldiers and their first lieutenant were joined by those members of their force who had lodged under Mr. Shaker's roof. They were all impatient to be gone, for they had learned that a force of men, probably secessionists, had arrived at one of the stations below, and it was feared they might encounter the Federal party passing through Blue Hills.

Good cast a look of triumph at me on this intelligence, and said significantly: "Shall we take the road to Rocky Cross, or go back as we came?" I made no remark, and he added emphatically, as the company moved off: "Don't trust too implicitly to idle tales brought by strangers. Believe me that man was either a spy who wished to trap me by sending me away from safety, or a robber on the lookout for pillage. Yours respectfully, Good."

We were just settled after the bustle attendant on the departure of Mr. Shaker's guests when Sally brought news from the village, of the most alarming nature. The country was in a state of great disorder: an old man living near the station had been murdered during the previous night—the telegraph wires were cut in every direction, and it was said that Captain Good's company would never reach Rocky Cross alive.

A message soon came from the store-keeper, one of the most important functionaries at Blue Hills, to recom-

mend Mr. Shaker to convey away to some place of safety whatever property of value he possessed, as there was no saying what would be the fate of any building in the hamlet. Mr. Shaker's attachments were conspicuous forthwith—all hands were called to aid in moving his books from the library to the floor below, and the next hour witnessed a scene of unusual confusion in the establishment. With nervous hands Mr. Shaker selected the most ancient and valuable of these possessions, which, with Singular's aid, he piled upon a huge hay-rack as far as its dimensions would allow. Mr. Shaker covered the books with blankets, and when Singular had attached the oxen he moved off with his precious cargo in the direction of the village.

Twist wiped his face and sat down by the dog-kennel, too much overcome by his recent exertions to do more than shake his head dolefully in response to a loud call of "Sing'lar" from the sitting-room. As I hastened thither I found Mrs. Judson and Sally were tying in a coverlet a series of articles ranging from feather beds to silver forks and salt-spoons.

In the midst of these operations a figure leaped the garden fence, and Tomlin entered the capacious apartment where he stood for some minutes gazing at the scene unheeded by the busy group.

"Where's that company that were here last night?" inquired the visitor.

"Gone to Rocky Cross," I responded, "Captain Good said he had no faith in warnings brought from uncertain sources."

Tomlin elevated his eyebrows and sat down with the freedom that seemed natural in the disordered state of the country, disposing of several eggs in the coals, and watching the process of their roasting with a reflective air and an occasional glance at the scene of Mrs. Judson's labors.

"Now then," she said, dragging aside one huge bundle of effects; "that's Mr. Shaker's blue chany pitcher—s'pose it'll break in the box wagon?"

"Not in straw," I answered, "but you should tie the mirrors better, Mrs. Judson."

"Going to Saratoga?" asked Tomlin. Mrs. Judson, who had cast some furtive glances in the direction of the visitor, asked me in a low tone: "One of them zows, ain't it, was up to mother's yesterday?"

I said "Yes" aside. Tomlin now asked where were the old gentleman, and Twist.

"Mr. Shaker, he's gone to the village," replied Mrs. Judson. "Sing'lar's jest crawled arter some of the neighbors to help him catch Gusty. Be back about noon, I suppose."

Mrs. Judson, Sally and I hied to the barn, where the box wagon already stood piled with featherbeds and carpets. The looking-glass and crockery were soon added, when we found it past our efforts to move the wagon out on terra firma.

"We'll hev' to onload agin," said Mrs. Judson.

"Thair's that ar feller comin'," remarked Sally; "mebbe he'll help."

Tomlin leisurely approached, eyed the wagon and expressed his opinion that it was woman's work, then lifted the shafts, and the conveyance jolted out of the wagon-house, with a force that impelled Mrs. Judson to spring after the crockery and Sally after the looking glasses. All was safe, however."

"Now then where's your horse?" demanded he, "unless you expect to draw the things yourselves."

"Gusty's way down in the back lot. Tole Sing'lar to catch him, but he's cleared out entirely."

"Run from the rebels, eh?"

"Ain't runnin' very fast, I guess," said Mrs. Judson,

"an' I'm bound he shan't hev Gusty to kerry him. Miss Renshawe an I's agoin with the baggage."

"You'd better stay where your are," rejoined Tomlin, "unless you value the baggage more than your lives. I'll harness the horse for you, so finish your packing and be quick."

He vaulted over the fence, ran across the meadow, and brought up Gusty in short order. Singular returned to assist in the harnessing: and in compliance with Mrs. Judson's strenuous admonition he was soon urging off Gusty, who moved slowly before his load, up the highway in the direction of the old woman's cottage.

Mr. Shaker's house was soon a lively scene, as many women belonging to the village had hastened thither to discuss the approaching calamities, and seek all the consolation that numbers could inspire. The sitting-room was full. Most were women of the better class in the village. Among the motley crowd only one figure was familiar; it was that of the old woman, Mrs. Judson's mother, who brought the important intelligence that Captain Good and his company were so far safe, and that they were all hid away in the woods above her house. After this information had been repeated in every possible form, and discussed till it was fairly worn out, the aged female took refuge in a corner of the room where she proceeded to solace herself with her pipe. Mrs. Judson's anxieties about the furniture increased. Singular, in going towards Rocky Cross, would be sure to fall into the jaws of the rebels with all his cargo, for though slow enough on ordinary occasions Mrs. Judson declared that a "faster feller to run into danger never was seen."

Armed with two listeners the old woman went into a detailed account of her recent grievances. "Thar was no less than five of them fellows," she said, "what do you call 'em?—swarrows,—fiar swarrows, settled themselves

in my house the day before yesterday, and there they stayed and not a word must be spoken or a place to sit down for anybody. Two of 'em stole everything there was in the house—the other two was the sassiest impidentest fellers I ever seed in my life. And the civilest one of the lot brought a great horse and stood him in the smoke-house, and there he stays yet, and was hootin and bellerin all night, and where his owner was nobody knew."

"Do you mean Tomlin?" said I.

"Law sakes, I don't know none of their names. The feller with the hoss is tall and quite a likely looking man; he didn't come with the swarrows at all—he got thar night before last, and I recollect I had to boil more coffee for his supper and then the rest all wanted a cup, and they lay round the floor screeching and singing till twelve o'clock."

"Was Elisha in last night?" asked I.

"I don't know their names. There was one came in this morning, as drunk as a fool. He had on a shirt of printed caliker under the red one. He said it was an old dress of his granny's. The other feller took him out under the pump and gave him a ducking, and I thought he wanted it enough."

"As for that ere Tomlin, Miss Renshawe," remarked Mrs. Judson to me, "he's as oncivil a feller as one would want to meet around a kentry. I heerd him tellin' Sing-lar this mornin, when he was agoin' off, that he didn't see why those two women wanted to run from the rebels or any one else. One on 'em was darned old and t'other one was confounded ugly."

Supposing the latter part of the compliment to apply to me, I endeavored to master the chagrin it occasioned, with some mortification that it should have produced any at all. I soon persuaded myself that an opinion from such a source was done very little.

Time wore on, and as there were no signs of any rebels from Blue Hills, everybody's apprehensions calmed down considerably. One by one the women dropped off, and the old woman, Mrs. Judson, Sally, and I were left to undisturbed possession of the premises.

It was ten o'clock, perhaps later, for the sun was riding quite high in the heavens, when a distant boom from the north reached our ears in its reverberations through the intervening cliffs.

"That was a gun!" cried Mrs. Judson, starting up. "They're at it now, as sure as fate."

"Lord! the poor critters!" groaned the old woman. "Let's run up to the rock and look."

The ledge of rock alluded to, lay a short distance from the first curve made by the road to the northward. Following close on Mrs. Judson, we soon reached the flat jut of the highest cliff, whence we all three gazed anxiously towards the distant hills of Rocky Cross, straining eyes and ears, but seeing nothing, save the fair fields the noble forests, the white cottages, scattered sparsely though the landscape, the long stretch of calm valley, undulation and plain, and the solemn azure clouds. The sound of a second gun soon reached our ears, and a succession of quick, sharp shots cut the air, rattling off in the thicket, where they lay crackling like the fire among thorns.

"See! see the smoke!" cried Mrs. Judson, as the cloud curled over the heads of the distant trees. "Sing'lar's up thar, right in the thick of it, and Gusty, and all the things. Wish now we'd sent 'em to the village."

"Mebbe they'll fight up thar till they've all got killed on both sides," said the old woman. "Thar's a big smoke, s'pect it's my house a-goin'."

There, seemed, however, to be a cessation of hostilities,

for some minutes passed without further disturbance. Just then I descried the form of a man running into the gate of the garden.

"Thar's that same young cuss of a swarrow!" exclaimed the old woman. "What in conscience can he be after conjuring in thar?"

The last remark was made in reference to the movements of the Zouave, who, after running in and out of the cottage, around and beyond it, and after looking into the shed and the smoke-house, and other out-houses, was at last attracted by a screech from the old woman, who, standing on tip-toe, with both hands to her mouth, gave him notification of her position. Forthwith he came up the ledge by the same path, though with more deliberate step, and disclosed the well-known features of the Zouave, Alancen.

"Whar's Tomlin?" was his first question.

"Oh, just look at this battle!" cried Mrs. Judson, whose tongue had not ceased to run since we had arrived at our present station.

"Battle!" echoed Alancen; "that's nothing but banging a little to make believe they don't know the rebels are coming;—I say, whar's Tomlin?"

As he spoke, his eye traversed restlessly the roads in all directions. He took a step or two backward and beckoned to me.

"Hevn't you seen Tomlin to-day?"

I replied I had seen him at Mr. Shaker's.

"He said I must meet he here this morning. He owes me fifteen cents, and so I come. Hevn't you seen any sign of he around here?"

A distant call attracted our attention to the gate of the lawn, at which stood a man whom, at that distance, it was difficult to identify.

"Thar's somebody a-shoutin'," said Mrs. Judson; "he

just come up the hill, that is, his shirt did, I didn't see *him*."

"That's he," said Alancen, and hastening down the cliff he emerged on the highway, where Tomlin speedily met him. After a short conversation Alancen started off on a fast run for the village, and Tomlin struck into the woods.

Anxiously did we await intelligence from the quarter of the omens. None came; and it wore on to broad high noon with our uncertainty still unrelieved. It was some time after our descent from the rock, where we had listened to the awe-inspiring sounds from the north, that Singular's return was heralded by Sally. Gusty's familiar image, and Twist's conspicuous straw hat, were next in sight, and the box-wagon rattled into the court-yard at a more tumultuous rate than was usual under the auspices of its methodical driver.

Singular was armed with exciting intelligence. There had been a tremendous battle—Captain Good had surrendered, and had been carried off to Rocky Cross a prisoner. Three men of his company had been wounded, and they were then at the cottage of Mrs. Judson's mother. The surgeon had been sent for, and Singular himself, after making sure that the fight was ended, had ventured to seize upon Gusty and the wagon, and thus avoided what he termed "a powerful tiresome walk home."

"Don't onharness, Sing'lar," shouted Mrs. Judson. "Let Gusty stan' while I get ready. Mother and me's a-goin' up there, right away. You ken kill a few chickens, and put 'em into the wagon. Thar can't be nothin' left up thar to eat, with all them fire zows a visitin' sin day afore yesterday."

This surmise was confirmed by the old woman, and when half a dozen good sized baskets, filled with provis-

ions, had been placed in the wagon, Gusty again moved off to the north, with the two females on the seat.

Singular, in the meantime, had gone to meet Mr. Shaker, and on his return from an unsuccessful search for his master, was quite surprised to find that the women had gone. During that morning Gusty had already traveled six miles, and he had a spavin which was always worse when he was driven. Singular knew those women would drive so hard as to finish him off completely. He assured me confidentially, that "that July Judson" was a very contrary creetur; raely, a crookeder stick he'd never seen in his life, and she was allus in a hurry. If there was anything in this world he did despise it was a woman or a man that was all the time a-blowin' a whistle, and travelin' like a rail-road car. Thar ort to be moderation in all things, and six miles for Gusty in one day was more than enough.

I paid but little attention to these murmurings at first, until I found that other miseries than Gusty's were involved.

"Then, you see," Twist continued, "Mr. Shaker'll be back, and be wantin' me to help move his books. I can't go clar back up thar agin, not if they never don't git thar medicines."

I asked what medicines he meant, and was informed that the doctor had met him on the road, and commissioned him to procure several drugs at the village, which he expected to need in the course of the day. These Twist would not take it upon himself to carry. It was a small package of several small phials, and perceiving that Singular was obdurate, I determined immediately to repair the delinquency. I saw his mind was greatly relieved as soon as I announced my intention, for he was not so far given over to his idols as not to feel some compunctions for his neglect of the wounded men.

"Singular," I said, just as I was about setting out with my basket of medicines on my arm; "what was it that Mr. Tomlin said to you about Mrs. Judson and myself this morning?"

"This mornin'?" echoed Twist, with a conscious look.

"Yes, when you were getting into the box-wagon."

"Wall, he did mention a little su'thin' ; said she warn't very young, an' you warn't—very harnsome. I'm much obleeged to you for totin' up the medicine stuff, but it'll be a powerful tiresome walk ef ye don't meet with a lot o' soldiers. Have the gun?"

I declined, with thanks, and, rendered nervous by the late surmise, I proceeded to execute my errand at a gait that must have excited Singular's admiration.



CHAPTER V.

THE doctor's gig stood at the gate of the cottage just as I arrived. Mrs. Judson ran out to take the medicines, mentioning Singular in terms more energetic than polite :

"Whole posse of 'em here—most dead—three rebels—can't tell whether t'other is a rebel or not. Ben flyin' round the house ever sence I come!"

The doctor came out with a morocco case of implements, stopped to take the medicines from me, and to utter some rapid directions to us both: "So many drops to the patients up-stairs, and the powders to Tomlin."

"Tomlin!" I exclaimed; "is he hurt?"

"Shot in the leg," replied Mrs. Judson, "walked up through the woods afterwards, anyhow."

The doctor drove off with a promise to call in the eve-

ning, and I followed Mrs. Judson in, so precipitately that I nearly ran against Tomlin, who was lying on the floor near the door-way, his breath coming and going in quick, strong gasps, and the perspiration in large drops on his face and temples. The old woman, rendered decidedly cross by the present inundation of guests, whom, she declared, she should never get rid of in a month, was bustling about with sheafs of straw, filling the room with dust and confused grumblings. For my own part, my commiseration rendered me dumb for some minutes; then I ventured to ask Tomlin whether I could serve him, by writing to apprise his friend of the accident. To this he simply said "No ;" and when I added a suggestion that he might like to be sent home, replied that he had none.

After this I was silent. The old woman now came in and announced to Mrs. Judson that she had extemporized a bed for Tomlin, in the room overhead, out of a couple of saw-horses, some boards, a sheaf of straw, and a horse blanket, which was all there was to be had.

"You know," said Tomlin, "that I can't get up-stairs. Bring the bed down."

"I can't; goodness, hev you down here botherin! Parlor an' settin' room both took up."

"I didn't say so," retorted Tomlin, crossly; "I wouldn't stay here in this smoky hole, I assure you. Get the bed into the smoke-house. I'd rather stay there fifty times over."

"Smoke'us! well, I guess so. S'pect you're goin' to keep me trodden up-stairs, an out-doors too! An' your hoss is in my smoke'us, and two hams Mr. Shaker gave me sufferin' to be smoked."

Tomlin answered in a petulant tone; but she could out-talk him, and finally he besought her to be silent. The argument in regard to the smoke-house was ended only by the appearance of the zouave Alancen.

"Hevn't you seen Tomlin?" asked he, presenting his shaggy head at the door. "Oh! there you air! What's the matter?"

Mrs. Judson and her mother began in full chorus to demand that Tomlin should be taken above stairs.

"Yes, for heaven's sake," said Tomlin, "before you say another word, get me out of this place before I am fairly dead from a woman's tongue."

"Bless my soul! you agoin' to be laid up!" exclaimed Alancen, "I'll do what I ken; but I ken't get you up them stairs nohow. Come out through this door and walk up the hill to the front one."

"It's all nailed up," cried the old woman, "and a stick nailed across it; I say it's nailed so nobody can get in—full of nails!"

"Massy! don't you s'pose I've seed nails afore?" retorted the zouave; "jest you go up an' onbolt, an' ef Tomlin can't get under the stick nor over it, why, I'll smash it down, and the least said the soonest mended. I don't see no use in nailin' up a house without it is to aggravate the fellows that wants to get in."

Tomlin took the arm of the zouave, and, though with much difficulty, made his way up the hill, and through the front door, Alancen breaking down the barricade, much to the old woman's indignation. The operation was quite fatiguing, and when Tomlin sank at last on the improvised couch, his deadly pallor was that of a man at the last gasp.

"Seems to be a-dyin'," remarked the aged female, in the tone of one who alludes to a consummation devoutly to be wished.

"Nawthin' but a chill," said Alancen, reassuringly. "Hain't you got no blankets nor bed-clothes to cover he up?"

"Narry a thing," asserted the hostess; "all I've got is on the other fellers, an' more too."

"Don't you know that those fellers is rebels?" said Alancen fiercely; "go right in thar, and haul the things orf. Don't you see what a chill he's got? shakes like a hoss agoin' to mill. Come, get them clothes orf the rebels I say."

Tomlin with some difficulty gasped out a protestation. Nothing on those beds should be touched. There was his coat below stairs, and a sheep-skin in the smoke-house.

"Sheep-skin!" yelled the old woman; "that's a good sheep-skin—can't hev it here noway."

"Get it," roared Alancen; and after much grumbling the sheep-skin came. Alancen threatened to nail it fast to the boards if the old woman said any more, and at any rate he should mount guard there for the rest of the afternoon to take care of his "comrade."

The other zouave came in before long. Tomlin still quite exhausted, held a discourse with him in an undertone, and the result was an errand on Elisha's part at Rocky Cross. The zouaves insisted on dinner as a preliminary, and for some time the meal proceeded peaceably till Alancen's wrath was excited at last by a comment made by his companion on his peculiarities of diction.

"What makes you all the time keep sayin' 'he,' when you ort to say 'him,' Lance?" he demanded. "Don't you know it's bad grammar? 'tell he' and 'take he'—who ever heerd sech talk?"

"You poor known-nauthen creeter," said Alancen, profoundly compassionate. "All the grammar books will tell you it's onreggilar to say him the way folks always says it."

"Bad grammar to say him!" cried Elisha.

"Yes, I tell you, I am, thou art, he is, contractions, Isn, yoursn, hisn—got a good whippin' once on that to school; I ken show you 'he is' in any grammar."

"That may be, but not 'he' all the time," expostulated Elisha.

The discussion grew loud; the zouaves yelled, grew red in the face, and hammered on the table with knives and fists. An admonishing call from above sounded in a second's interval of exhaustion.

"Lord! that man ain't dead yet," groaned the old woman. Mrs. Judson ran to the top of the step ladder and opened the door.

"Tell those fellows I won't have any more of that confounded noise," said Tomlin sharply. "I want you to give Elisha his dinner and get him off."

"I've giv' him his dinner," retorted Judson, and she pronounced Tomlin cross as two sticks—pitied his wife if he had one, and his mother if she had seen him grow up. The disturbance was quelled in a measure: Elisha was soon ready to go, and struck off on foot for the North, and Alancen withdrew to the upper rooms. We had deferred our repast till it could be taken at leisure, and a discussion peaceful in its nature, which next arose, promised to supply enough to think of aside from any other consideration.

CHAPTER VI.

ROCKY CROSS.

IT related to my trunk, and any woman who peruses these pages will readily understand the feeling of anxiety with which I contemplated its fate. The carpet-bag brought by Singular Twist from the depot contained enough for present necessities, but in my trunk were much summer clothing, valuable ornaments and laces, highly prized mementoes, letters, books and many things too numerous to mention. The more I con-

sidered the matter, the stronger grew my reluctance to remain in ignorance of its fate. I was sure that if I were to go to Rocky Cross I should meet with no detention, should be civilly treated, might be allowed to come away with my property, or at least might ascertain into whose hands it had fallen. Mrs. Judson's whose opinion of the rebels was by no means very severe, agreed with me in the general probability of my self-assurance, and as my anxiety grew stronger, she suggested that a way might be found by which I might succeed. The secessionists had taken Gusty away that very morning, therefore neither he nor the box wagon was available. Rocky Cross was eight miles distant—five hours would be ample time to take me thither and back on a horse not remarkably fleet, allowing for little detentions. I saw no objection except the want of a horse, side-saddle and riding habit.

Thar was Tomlin's hoss out in the smoke-house, the old woman remarked; she thought his legs looked pretty long—guessed he could go and come in two hours. Mrs. Judson added that among the valuables which she had rescued were Miss Edith Launey's side-saddle and a brand-new riding habit. She could not wonder in the least at my anxiety about the trunk, nor at my fearlessness of the rebels whom she thought the mildest, peaceablest folks she ever had seen.

An inspection of the riding habit and side-saddle was quite satisfactory. The former was of very handsome materials, though preposterously long, being calculated to tangle the feet of any horse of ordinary height, and the decorations of gilt cord and gold buttons I did not regard as adding to its taste or beauty. The side-saddle was well equipped with girths and straps of no doubtful strength, and the next thing in order was asking Tomlin for the loan of his horse. I made my way up the step-ladder to the room above with caution, being reluctant to

disturb him if asleep. Tomlin was wide awake, his large eyes fastened dreamily on a quarter of the wall, on which the sunbeams reflected from an array of tin outside the window kept up an unremitting play.

"I think of taking a ride this afternoon," said I, "and I came to borrow your horse."

The full dark eyes, shaded by a hand nearly as white as the sheep-skin on which it rested, regarded me for a minute as though I had asked for a cannon.

"Going on business, or merely for the exercise?"

"Business of a pressing nature."

More silent scrutiny;—the eyes grew reflective.

"You are a Union woman, I believe?"

"Will that make any difference about my having the horse?"

"No; oh no. Going to be gone long?"

"Not a great while; four or five hours."

More silence. I grew impatient.

"You have not said yet whether I can have the horse."

"I'm afraid you can't manage him."

"Can I have him, Mr. Tomlin?"

"Yes," replied Tomlin, in the tone of a man who assents because he looks upon denial as useless. I hastened to the smoke-house, and must confess to a feeling of dismay at sight of the quadruped. He was a beast whose appearance was calculated to dismay a woman less determined on enterprise than I. Mrs. Judson assisted me to put on the saddle, and I hastened back to the house to clothe myself in Miss Launey's riding habit.

"That girl will get her neck broken," said Tomlin to Mrs. Judson, who had gone up to attend on the patients "Do you know where she is going?"

"After some clothes," Mrs. Judson answered with very proper reticence. Tomlin declared that, in that case, he would say no more, but a minute after I heard him ask-

ing her who I was and where I came from, and desiring her to tell me that the horse was unbearable on a trot and dangerous on a canter, and that I ought not to venture him off a walk.

I untied the horse with some awe—he behaved very well till he reached the fence and I was safe on his back, when he turned around thrice in quick waltzing time. I reined him in with a strong pull on the curb bit, and thus brought to his senses he walked quietly through the gate, and I turned his head in the direction of Rocky Cross.

It was some time before I ventured to let him exceed a walk, but when he had coursed through a tract of forest, where the branching limbs were effectual protection against the rays of the summer's sun, Bucephalus merged into a trot, a gait so swift as to put considerable distance, in a short space of time, between me and the cottage. I felt a little nervous, and was doubtful whether I had done wisely in undertaking so perilous a journey, even for the sake of an important trunk. It was not only a lonely but a solitary road,—I met no one in the whole course of the distance, which I followed according to the minute direction given me by Mrs. Judson. On reaching the turnpike I rode on faster, and soon came in sight of the secession flags floating from the steeples of Black Cross. Just before I entered the village, as I passed a little gothic cottage, oppressed by a load of shrubbery which was scarcely restrained by the fence, a young lady issued from the gate, which she appeared to think unworthy the touch of her fair fingers, for she opened it with an air of great disgust, and addressed me.

“Do you know where I can find a saddle-horse?”

I replied as courteously as possible to the effect that I did not know, and the young lady retreated through the shrubbery. I rode on. Indeed it would have been a difficult matter to stop; but the first face I had met

with on the way naturally made some impression on me. It was long, thin, and colorless, the eyes rather sunken, and the expression unattractive; but the other details struck me with no little wonder. Her figure was slender, and not particularly graceful; her dress, of a black though not mourning material, was made and trimmed in the latest fashion, and her hair appeared to be fresh from the hands of the barber. I had but little time to think of her, however, as I was soon in the heart of the village. Soldiers were standing about the sidewalks, and walking in knots of two and three together, and secession colors met my eye in every direction. As I turned down the main road a young man, in the dress of an officer, crossed the street.

It was Captain Charles Berkley. I knew him immediately, and a second look settled the conviction on my imagination. Before this, I had seen him for a few minutes only, under circumstances which did not permit a close scrutiny; still my present impression was firm. Revolving the matter busily, I rode on to the station, where I expected to find my trunk. It was not there, and the solitary occupant of the depot informed me that everything there in the shape of baggage had been taken to the Colonel's head-quarters.

Having come so far, I thought it a pity to return without success, and on making application to a middle-aged and gentlemanly-looking officer for assistance, found it afforded in the most polite and ready manner. The officer conducted me immediately to the head-quarters. Here I descended—the horse was led off to be fed, and I followed my guide into the parlor of a little tavern fronting on the street. There was much baggage piled about the room, and I soon recognized my trunk standing on end in a corner of the apartment, the centre-piece of a pile of well-filled sacks, empty knapsacks, and broken baskets.

While I sat looking over some New York papers of a recent date which lay on the table, an elderly female in a dark dress, plaid shawl, and old straw bonnet, trimmed with dingy ribbon, came into the room, asking to see Colonel Hunter immediately, without delay. Her name was desired. "Mrs. Ryan," she answered, "important business." Mrs. Ryan was asked to see one of the staff, but no—nobody would do but the Colonel.

The appearance of an officer in uniform, who looked as though the cares of a nation rested on his shoulders, was the consequence of this demand. He was a stoutly built man, of average height, and carried himself with an air of confidence. His features were somewhat flat—the mouth broad, the eyes blue, the forehead squarish, and his whole bearing was free and easy, rather than elegant. He came in in a great hurry, and inferring, probably, from the magnificence of my costume, that I was the more important party of the two, addressed me first. "My time is quite limited, madam," he said, "so command me immediately."

I said I had been without my trunk for two or three days, and as it was in the room at present I took the liberty of asking if I might have it. I had ridden about ten miles on horseback for the purpose of making this request.

"Good heavens, Mrs. Ryan!" exclaimed the Colonel, "couldn't you have seen one of my staff on this trifling subject? You can have your trunk, certainly. Will you take it away on horseback?"

I expressed my willingness to confer with any member of the staff, and announced that my name was not Ryan. An officer was called in by the Colonel, and directed to attend to my wants. I had the key of the trunk, and while the officer was ascertaining whether it would fit, my attention was caught by a dialogue carried on be-

tween Mrs. Ryan and Colonel Hunter. She announced that she had received a letter from Tomlin.

"Very happy that you have received a letter, and sorry not to know Tomlin," said the Colonel; any more important intelligence?"

"Here's the note; I thought you might read it," rejoined the woman. She handed the billet to Hunter, and he stood occupied with its perusal. I was anxious for the issue, but felt that it would not do to linger there. The trunk was acknowledged to be mine, and the means of its transportation was discussed feelingly by the officer who had been appointed to the trial. I informed him that there were some wounded soldiers at the cottage where I was staying, for whom an ambulance was to be sent from Rocky Cross; that I supposed my horse and wagon, (for I thought the possessive pronoun allowable under the circumstances,) would accompany the ambulance, and my trunk could come with it. The officer, who was certainly very obliging, attended immediately to the matter, and with such alacrity that by four o'clock, I, on Tomlin's well-fed steed, was riding on the homeward route in company with the ambulance, Gusty, Mr. Shaker's wagon, and two drivers. I kept a little in advance of the party, and was in ignorance of the peculiarities of their manners; therefore, when we reached the cottage, which was about an hour after sunset, I was rather surprised to find them both extremely tipsy.

Everything at the cottage remained the same, except that there was rather more bustle than when I left it, occasioned by the demands made by the wounded men on their female attendants. I contemplated with no little compunction the necessity of abandoning the poor fellows to the guidance of two drunken drivers for the distance of eight miles; but there seemed to be no alternative, and the next contingency to be provided against

was that of the said envoys' taking away more than they were entitled to carry. It was with some difficulty that I made them understand who were the proper objects of their care; and not until they had nearly dragged Tomlin off the bed, or, to speak more accurately, off the saw-horses and boards, could they be prevailed on to let go their hold. They were all off at last, the three wounded men, the two tipsy men, the ambulance, and the horse that drew it, to say nothing of a few bed-clothes, two straw ticks, a couple of candles, and several jugs, spirited away, probably, under the delusion that they contained something stronger than water.

I had just witnessed the last of these manœuvres, and had seated myself to the welcome refreshment of a little tea, served on the kitchen table, (for it was as late as nine o'clock, and after my long ride I was hungry,) when Mrs. Judson, after shutting the gate on the departing guests, dragged herself wearily in.

"That feller up-stairs, in the room overhead, wants to see you, Miss Renshawe," she said. "I don't know whether he'll wait till you've done supper or not—seems to be in a hurry."

I did not tarry; a few seconds found me up the step-ladder, and asking Tomlin what he wanted.

Tomlin was very restless, and quite feverish. He asked if all the doors were shut, so that those chattering women were out of hearing. Having made this matter sure I was next acquainted with his intentions.

"Any carriage or wagon on these premises?" he inquired.

I mentioned the box-wagon, which had just come from Rocky Cross.

He next inquired if his horse was below. I answered in the affirmative.

"What time of night is it?"

"Nine o'clock," said I.

Tomlin raised himself on one elbow, wincing visibly with the movement, and looked at the darkness gathering outside the window.

"Any moon?"

"Not till midnight."

Tomlin now informed me that it would be necessary for him to go that night to Caney Fork, a town about twenty miles distant. As he was not able to travel on horseback he would like to have the wagon got ready immediately.

I expressed some doubts of his sanity, but his very collected manner banished that idea. Forced to adduce some additional reason, Tomlin, though with evident reluctance, went into particulars. He informed me that for the past few days he had been acting as a scout for a small division of the Union Army. The presence of the Confederate troops at Rocky Cross was only temporary, and it needed only for him to go to Caney Fork to render it dangerous. The Rocky Cross regiment held Good, Gallorda, and their company prisoners. He happened to know—no matter how he received his information—that a body of Union men would stop that night at Caney Fork, and that when informed of the numbers and position of those at Rocky Cross, they would stop a little longer, and take them prisoners before proceeding. The zouave, Alancen, was to have aided in the expedition, but he had been away two or three hours, very probably intoxicated, and at all events, Tomlin could wait for him no longer.

It needed only this explanation to ensure in me the most willing of assistants. I hurried out doors to inspect the facilities. I found Mrs. Judson unharnessing Gusty, while her mother held the lantern.

"Men's work and all kinds you see, Miss Renshawe,"

said Mrs. Judson. "Here's poor Gusty as patient as a lamb, and I'm sorry about Miss Launey's side saddle. Them drunken fools turned that hoss out without takin orf the saddle, an' the crittur's rolled on it an' broke the horn."

"No matter," said I, "we must catch that horse again, and harness him to the wagon; Tomlin wants to go to Caney Fork."

"Wants to go *where*?" shouted both the women in astonishment. I repeated the announcement as calmly as possible.

"Head wanderin', think?" asked Mrs. Judson, in a tone calculated to give the death-blow to the project.

I said no—that he really had an important errand.

"I'll go in and see him," said Mrs. Judson, and after turning Gusty loose she followed me to the room of which Tomlin was the solitary occupant.

"I wouldn't go to Caney Fork to night if I was you," she said. "Won't your business keep till you can set up in bed, Mr. Tomlin."

"I'm going to-night," said Tomlin. "Make haste for God's sake, and harness that horse; the next thing will be to get me down stairs."

"I can't get you down stars. I hev'n't got the strength of Harkelus. And there's only three lone women here; how can we ever put the hoss in the wagon!"

"I didn't ask you to put him in the wagon, only in the shafts," said Tomlin. "Don't stand here arguing woman, I haven't all night to spare."

"I'll do jest what you say," said Mrs. Judson, appealing with a bewildered look to me.

"It is necessary, I fear," I replied.

Mrs. Judson took up the lantern, and though with much reluctance on her part, we sallied forth again.

"I don't see into this affair at all," she said. "Who's agoin' to drive?"

"I shall go with him," said I.

Mrs. Judson shook her head, deposited the lantern on the fence of the one-acre lot we had just entered, and we set about giving chase for the horse. But it soon appeared that it was much more easy to capture the said animal in a smoke-house than in an area of one acre. After uniting our efforts for some time we stopped to hold a council.

"Are there no oats that we can entice him with?" said I.

"Old red devil's hide is so full of oats now that his head's fairly turned with 'em. We'll try Gusty."

Gusty was tried and found to succeed as far as catching was concerned. He was guided obediently to the conveyance, but just as the harness was adjusted on his back he sighed, groaned, fell on his knees and gave every token of a cataleptic fit.

"Good laws! the hoss is a-dyin!" exclaimed Mrs. Judson. "Mr. Shaker's poor old Gusty!"

Poor old Gusty was immediately extricated, as fast as two pair of hands could accomplish it. Mrs. Judson wiped her forehead.

"Guess Tomlin won't get to Caney Fork to-night at this rate," she said. "Sixteen miles yesterday and to-day is too much for Gusty, and thar's that great snortin' red brute come to the fence to look on. Wuth while to try and catch him, think?"

I again suggested the oats. A peck measure full was provided and offered to the sagacious steed, who sniffed of them and quietly proceeded to their consumption. I soon had him fast by the mane, Mrs. Judson brought a halter and his capture was complete.

"Now, then, we'll get him right in the wagon." But this division of the triumph was diversified in its incidents. After multitudinous backings of the animal, which

without exaggeration was the tallest horse I ever saw, mingled with repeated solicitations on the part of Mrs. Judson, such as "Thar now, old feller, step straight." we urged the beast to a proper position. Just as we secured the traces a loud sigh on his part, and a staggering movement à la Gusty, was conducive to dismay.

"Get him out, quick!" exclaimed Mrs. Judson. "He'll break the shaves—he'll kick down the dash-board. Lord! he's like an elerphant! Unbuckle the breechin' strap quick. Seems handled just like Gusty. They must hev' been poisoned up thar at Rocky Cross."

The harness came off quicker than it ever went on, and as soon as the horse was freed from the incumbrance he manifested his sense of delight by prancing, kicking, tossing his head, and by various other equine manœuvres.

"Yer dancin' too soon, old feller!" exclaimed Mrs. Judson, whose wrath was aroused by this demonstration. "Couldn't wait till ye got in the lot! Now then I'll pay you for mimickin' poor old Gusty. The horse was again caught and backed up to the wagon. "Little you feel yer sixteen miles, cuttin' capers like that. Hist the shaves up and fetch em down on his back Miss Renshawe. I'm no notion of havin' him lyin' down on 'em agin'. Seems to hev' been a circus hoss, or sich."

"Tomlin's a hollerin'," observed the old woman from the kitchen.

"He's got to holler then," said Mrs. Judson; "been a hollerin' all day about nothing; he can holler now for somethin'. Yew'll hev to be carful goin' down hills, Miss Renshawe—breechin' is wonderful weak, and the hills atween here and Caney Fork is straight up and down, some on 'em."

Laying to heart this encouraging admonition, and having seen that the harness was as strongly secured as its joints would allow, we came back to the house, and having

made our way up the step ladder, found Mr. Tomlin in a state of great agitation.

"Hevn't but jest this minit got harnesssed," said Mrs. Judson.

"What the devil have you been doing?" said Tomlin; "it's nearly ten o'clock."

"Can't help it my lord if it is; that 'ere hoss of your'n cut so many didos—"

"Well never mind ; get me out to the wagon as quick as you can."

This operation was next considered. "Take me right up and carry me," suggested the subject. "There are three of you!"

"How much do you suppose you weigh?" asked Mrs. Judson.

"Not so much as I did this morning."

Our efforts were united, and after much labor we succeeded, not in lifting Mr. Tomlin, but in bringing down the saw-horses, boards, sheep-skins, etc., all in a heap.

"Now we've done it!" exclaimed Judson.

"You have certainly done it," said Tomlin, "if that means you've smashed my leg. Now, then, can't you drag me along the floor to the front door? then I'll try to walk."

"Maybe you'll walk to Caney Fork," said Mrs. Judson. Acting on his suggestion, she took one shoulder and I the other, while the old woman supported the wounded leg. In this unceremonious fashion we reached the front door.

Mrs. Judson spread a sheaf of straw in the wagon, which was backed up to the steepest part of the side-hill. The door was taken off its hinges, adjusted with one end on the wagon, the other on a level with the porch, and the rough transportation was soon effected.

The night wind blew cold on Tomlin's reduced frame,

and I hastened to bring out the coverings, while Mrs. Judson fastened in the board at the end, and placed the seat in front.

"Won't you go too, Mrs. Judson?" I asked.

"Wouldn't trust myself behind that harness over that rough road to-night for a fortune, and ef Tomlin's goin' to groan like that all the way, I wouldn't go for ten."

"Says put in the saddle," said the old woman, who had been adjusting the straw under Tomlin's head.

"Calkilate to ride hossback to-night?" asked Mrs. Judson. "Laws! laws! you'll get to Caney Fork in style! Better take Gusty, Mr. Tomlin; you and he's about a match."

"Means the side-saddle," answered the old woman.

The disabled side-saddle was brought; a delay of a few minutes ensued while Tomlin's pistols were sought in the remains of his bed, and with these securely deposited under the seat, I took my place, and Sunset, which I learned to be the name of the sagacious steed, moved off again under my guidance on the high-road. I looked back several times, rather regretfully, at the door, where Mrs. Judson's tall, gaunt form, and her mother's white cap were made visible by the rays of the candle which she held up to light my course. A turn in the road soon hid the friendly gleams. I heard the gate shut, and the door closed with decision; and I was left to my long journey with a wounded man, a tired horse, on a road where very few stars relieved the darkness.

CHAPTER VII.

CANEEY FORK.

DISAGREEABLE as were the features of the adventure, they did not present themselves in full force until I had accomplished the first mile of the journey, when they became painfully apparent. I was virtually without protection. My sole companion was a man prostrated by suffering, my only defence two pistols that I could not use, and beside the darkness of the night and loneliness of the road there was the danger of an encounter with enemies, or, quite as imminent, though scarcely less perilous, a breakdown. Uneasy and tremulous, I endeavored to keep up my sinking courage by asking Tomlin how he felt three times as often as necessary, my inquiries being constantly answered in a patient, reassuring tone, as though their motive was fully comprehended.

We had gone on thus for some time ; the night had grown so dark that I could no longer discern the ghastly outline of Tomlin's face on the straw. A sudden fear came upon me. If he should die on the journey how unspeakably awful would be my position ! Alone in the woods with a corpse ! Horrors ! In desperate fear I exclaimed, "Are you alive, Mr. Tomlin ?"

"Yes." Reassured by the information, and deriving much hope from the tone in which it was given, I endeavored to lead Tomlin into conversation. As a subject likely to interest him, I introduced my expedition to Rocky Cross, and detailed my search for my trunk. We had just passed an opening made by a cart path in the forest, and had proceeded on a stretch of ground unusually level, when the mention of Colonel Hunter naturally came in.

"What!" exclaimed Tomlin, "Did you know the name of any of the other officers, then?"

"Only Captain Charles Berkley."

"Who said *he* was there?"

No one; I saw him myself."

"You know Captain Berkley?"

"By sight."

"And a Mrs. Ryan came there," I added, "with a note for Colonel Hunter."

"A note?" exclaimed my companion.

"Yes, I think she said from you, if I heard the name aright."

After a short silence Tomlin spoke again, in a tone much more feeble.

"Miss Renshawe, I find I cannot accomplish this journey. You will be obliged to turn this conveyance around, and go back to the cottage."

Astonished at this change of base, I demurred. Tomlin insisted. He was much worse, found the hills getting very bad, and really could not proceed. As we were traveling over a very level surface, and as Tomlin's voice had grown feeble within a very few minutes, I found it impossible to comply.

"You have taken too much pains to urge on me the necessity of going, Mr. Tomlin," said I. "You find the disciple worse than his master. Go back I cannot."

"Why, madam, you cannot proceed against my wishes! I say we *must* go back."

"What's the alternative?"

Communication ceased for some time after this question. In the course of a minute a stray horse came wandering up the road-side. Tomlin's ear caught the sound of extra hoofs, and he startled me by calling out, loudly, "Hallo, friend, are you from Rocky Cross?"

"Oh, that's the alternative, is it?" said I, stopping

short, while the animal scampered away. "That's well; but as the next party may be a man, as well as a horse, we must provide for it, Mr. Tomlin."

I got down, turned Sunset about, and led him back to the opening of the cart-path in the thicket. Guiding the wagon well under the boughs, I immediately proceeded to unharness the horse.

"What on earth are you doing, Miss Renshawe?" asked Tomlin. I explained in a very few words.

"Not going to leave me here alone?" he exclaimed.

"You have left me no choice," I replied, in a tone of severity. "Once more, Mr. Tomlin, will you go with me to Caney Fork?"

"I cannot go with you. It's of no use to go now. That Ryan woman has betrayed me, if you *will* know the truth."

"You might have said so before," I answered. A new suspicion had come into my mind; that he feared not Mrs. Ryan, but me, learning my knowledge of so many names, and so much counterplotting.

That question was settled. The shafts fell, and Sunset was free.

"I wish to heaven I had two legs to-night," muttered Tomlin, as I took the saddle from the vehicle.

"Thank you," said I, "but I do not need your services. I was taught long ago to saddle a horse. I have had a practical education."

"Oh, d——d practical!" was the elegant rejoinder.

"If you must swear, Mr. Tomlin," I continued, "you might, at least, wait till I am out of hearing."

"I was not swearing at you," he replied.

"I presume it was at the horse. I am going now, and you need not suppose that I am at all deceived as to your real character. I believe you—firmly believe you to be a secessionist spy."

No answer. I was already on Sunset, when a short whistle from Tomlin brought the horse at once to the side of the wagon; a low click at the same moment revealed that a search for the pistols had been going on in the straw, and was successful.

"Good God!" I exclaimed, with a bound of the heart that I did not soon recover from; "are you going to kill me?"

"No," replied he, collectedly, "I was about to offer you my pistols—you may need them before your journey's end."

"Thank you; they would be useless; I never handled one in my life. For a parting word, Mr. Tomlin, I leave you never expecting to see you again alive, and I regret deeply that I hear no other language than that of oaths on the lips of a dying man."

With this parting admonition, to which no response was given, I rode on. I was stiff from my ride in the afternoon, a fact which I did not perceive until on the saddle. If the concomitants of the journey before were far from pleasant, they were still less so now, and my heart almost failed me when I turned the horse's head again to the right. It was no time for misgivings or heart-flutterings, however, and the pressing consideration of physical pain was banished by the importance of my errand. Determined that it should not be a tedious ride, I urged, or rather invited, my steed to proceed on a canter. The nights at that period of the year were short, and I was well aware that three hours after midnight would bring daybreak. I had so far remembered Mrs. Judson's instructions and followed them implicitly, but I was confused by a caprice of the road which I could not determine was a lane. I took it, and after following innumerable windings, sometimes without the sign of a fence by the roadside, I found myself on a broad plain,

where the track grew more distinct at the intersection of a crossroad. I took the crossroad, and about an hour after sunrise reached the river side.

"Can you tell me what place this is?" I asked of a wretched looking woman who was raking a few sticks together by the road.

"It's Caney Fork mill-pond," she replied.

"And how near is the village?"

"About two miles, up north."

As I was about moving on, she added, "I wouldn't go up through Caney Fork—troop of sojers there. Cum las' night, and goin' off sometime this mornin' to Washington."

A minute direction was asked and given. Sunset did not move at his original gait, and by the time I rode into Caney Fork, no article of his appearance belied the fact that he had traveled all night on a small supper. However Tomlin had obtained his information, it was certainly accurate. The troop was there, and they were Union men. Misgivings crowded upon me. How could they act without orders—moreover, if they were to go to Washington, how could their departure be deferred?

On my interview with the lieutenant colonel which took place in the street I found these difficulties not advanced. The company commanded by Good and Gallorda belonged to that regiment; as that company was captured and at Rocky Cross his only choice was to set them free. In less than an hour, the regiment was under full march toward Rocky Cross, and Sunset regaling himself with four quarts of oats beneath the shade of a maple tree near the principal hotel under his late rider's special superintendence.

I waited nearly all day for intelligence from Rocky Cross, agitated by every rumor that disturbed the village where I was, and as apparently all the women in the place had come out on the door stones and piazzas, these

rumors were numerous enough. Late in the afternoon, the Federal troops returned—they had been to Rocky Cross, scattered all Hunter's regiment without killing or capturing anybody, and brought back Good, Gallorda, and the whole company intact together, with no end of baggage, that had been left behind. This baggage, laden on several wagons, was hurriedly inspected.

I was just going off with Sunset when this came to pass, and my attention was attracted, by seeing a large load of books among the plunder. On these I bestowed close inspection, and before long discovered that they were Mr. Shaker's most valuable possessions.

This fact I made immediately known to the lieutenant colonel, and it was at once enacted that those books should go directly back to their owner under my auspices. Knowing that it would be quite unsafe to leave them at Caney Fork, I immediately hired two wagons to take them back at once. Captain Good came up to thank me for his recent deliverance, in a manner that seemed to say, he would have preferred to remain with his captors rather than be indebted to such an auxiliary.

"Much obliged to you, ma'am, or rather to your horse. Methinks I've seen your face before—Shakspeare. You have both done a most gallant thing! Yours respectfully—Good."

It was nearly sunset before those wagons were loaded, and the regiment with its recovered members on the way to Washington. Much as I disliked remaining at Caney Fork, I had no option between that and another ride at night through the woods, and feeling scarcely equal to that undertaking, I remained that night at the cottage of an aged widow with whom I had scraped acquaintance during the day; I had directed the men who drove away with the wagons to go to Tomlin's rescue; giving them such precise instructions where he was to be

found, that I was sure they could not fail to discover him. I sent to him a small basket with provisions and a little bottle of brandy, as it was by no means probable that he had had anything to eat during a night and day, alone in the woods. I sent also a message to Mr. Shaker, requesting that Tomlin might remain under his roof, and my mind was thus relieved of all its compunctions on his account.

I was quite tired out with my recent exertions. The previous day I had ridden from Blue Hills to Rocky Cross and back again, a distance of nearly twenty miles ; the previous night ten miles more on horseback ; for I judged that it was about ten, I had journeyed in Tomlin's company ; it was not surprising therefore that I had no inclination for further travel, and was content to postpone Blue Hills till morning.

Early in the morning, in fact at daybreak, I hastened away from Caney Fork, without experiencing the slightest regret, deferring my breakfast until I was back at Mr. Shaker's. The millpond was passed speedily, and in the course of two hours I reached Rocky Cross, where the landmarks were soon recognizable. Just as I left the village, I caught sight once more of the little cottage with its dormer windows and wreaths of shrubbery. The little gate and stone paving were so familiar, that I was by no means surprised when the picture was completed, by the appearance of the same young lady whom I had encountered on the previous day, or by a repetition of the same question :

"Do you know where I can find a saddle-horse?"

"My goodness," I could not resist exclaiming, "haven't you found a saddle horse yet?" My interlocutrix, who at first had not recognized me, by reason of the difference in dress and accoutrements which I presented, looked somewhat annoyed on the discovery and again retreated.

My second encounter with this damsel, inspired me with considerable interest : there was a certain grace and style about her, which, in spite of the affectation conspicuous in her manner, was by no means unpleasing. I was sorry that I had answered with a familiarity that might have caused surprise, wondered whether she thought I might have offered her Sunset, and did not cease to ponder the subject till I came in sight of Blue Hills.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SCENE of confusion presented itself, at that hour of the morning that I rode into the spacious gateway of Mr. Shaker's lawn. A pile which at a little distance was of an indescribable shape, and of an indistinguishable color, rose on the planks at the back of the house, while the figures of Mr. Shaker, Mrs. Judson, and Sally Bunn, ranged to and fro alternately ; a fourth, which it was easy to recognize as Singular Twist, remained half-way between, in a stationary position.

When I entered the yard I perceived the pile to consist of Mr. Shaker's books and furniture, sent down by me from Caney Fork. Mr. Shaker expressed his warm indebtedness to me in a manner that left no doubt of his sincerity. As soon as I had an opportunity I put a question to Mrs. Judson relating to Tomlin's welfare.

"Hain't seen nor heerd nawthin of him," said Mrs. Judson in astonishment.

"Then I must institute a search," I said, "but first tell Sally to get me some breakfast; I came from Caney Fork fasting."

"Hain't none of us had breakfast," said Mrs. Judson, "ben all the mornin' gettin in the books. Sing'lar had his'n I reckon ; I seed him a cunjerin' about with toast and hot water this mornin'."

Mrs. Judson led the way within the house and placed the viands on the table. Twist followed meekly.

"When did the books come, Singular?" I inquired.

"Bout middle o' the night," said Singular; "I heer'd wheels a rollin' and looked out o' the winder and tole 'em not to make no noise. I was feer'd, if Mr. Shaker'd know'd it was the books, he'd a histed us all out o' bed to go out there an' tote 'em all in. Lor'! what a job—wud a-tuk till mornin'."

"I heerd 'em bangin' to get in," said Mrs. Judson, "and I shed a gone down, but you was a yawpin' to 'em out the winder, an' I expected you'd go down and let 'em in every minit. Ef I'd a know'd it was the books, I shed a-had all hands out to fetch 'em in I can tell you ; most ruined them marble an' vellum kivers lyin' out all night in the damp. Heerd you a tellin' 'em to dump 'em right down back o' the house ; thort it must be a load o' stuns they'd ben cartin'."

"Wal thar, needn't be shoutin' July. Mr Shaker's clus by; needn't tell what I said to 'em."

"Sent 'em clar back to Caney Fork without anythin' to eat ; oh you did, Sing'lar, you turned 'em off, and I heerd 'em say suthin' about stayin' all night."

"Shar! that was only one man they wanted to stay—did stay too—all night."

"Staid! whar on airth—how did he get in?"

"Didn't get in," said Singular, growing more energetic as he saw Mr. Shaker retreating toward the beloved pile ; "tole 'em to put him in the granary. He was hurt, that ar' Tomlin that was round a few days ago."

"Sing'lar!" Mrs. Judson's voice outdid itself—"you

don't mean to say you cudn't git out o' bed to open the door for a poor wounded dying man? You needn't try to keep me still! Don't car ef Mr. Shaker does hear."

"Singular," I added, reproachfully, "you cannot mean, I trust, for the sake of humanity, that you left him all night alone in the granary; he may be dead from starvation and suffering."

"Won't starve," said Singular, testily; "I toted out a big pitcher o' toast water to him this mornin', in the middle of all the worry over the books; didn't know 'twas Tomlin till to-day, and didn't know anything ailed him; men said he wanted to stay all night, an' I said, stay in the granary. I'll go out agin now, ef you say so."

"No you needn't, Sing'lar,—wouldn't get there till Christmas——" I stopped Mrs. Judson at the door. "I'll go first,—which way is it?"

The housekeeper pointed, and I followed her direction. There was a rusty lock on the door, which had been broken, probably by Tomlin's escort. The place was nearly choked up with old barrels, and dim with cobwebs; and the scamper that took place among the rats on my entrance indicated that they had been flourishing there for several generations. The bed consisted of the same sheaf of straw, one or two ragged horse-blankets, and the sheep-skins which had appertained to the sawhorses and accompanied the commencement of the adventurous expedition to Caney Fork. The pitcher of toast-water stood by the bedside unmolested. Tomlin was lying with his right arm bent back under his head in lieu of a pillow, in which article the bed was deficient. When he saw who had entered he turned his face sullenly to the wall without speaking.

"How do you feel, Mr. Tomlin?" I asked.

"Very miserable, thank you," he replied.

Seeing that he was alive, and rather daunted to find

that his misery was attributed to me, I withdrew from the granary to appeal to Mr. Shaker, who was inspecting the diminished pile through his spectacles. As soon as I could disengage his attention from the condition of his library I made my request.

"A room for a wounded man! My dear child, how can you ask such a question? Certainly—the best room in the house is at his disposal. Let Julia get it ready, and Singular must take care of him. I'm very busy now, so I will arm you with *carte blanche*."

Mrs. Judson only awaited this permission. "Go call Sing'lar, Sally," she shouted, "and then run up to my room for intment and bandages. S'pose I can't get Mr. Shaker to speak ef I ask for one of his shirts, so I'll take it an' say nothin'. Come, Sing'lar, got to get Tomlin into the house, right off."

Singular groaned at the prospect, and by the time Mrs. Judson had called him seven times from the granary, I saw him move towards that building. The transportation was effected by dint of her strenuous admonitions all the way. She came down at last, wiping her face, and after informing Mr. Shaker several times that breakfast was ready, placed a chair for me at the table.

"Coffee's cold, I'll heat it over," said she; "Mr. Shaker won't eat or speak while the books is out thar. Dear, I'd rather hev kerried Tomlin all the way alone than hev hollered so at Sing'lar. He wanted to set down every few steps."

"Is Tomlin very ill, Mrs. Judson?"

"Wonerful weak. Sing'lar's a-washin' him now. Took fifteen minutes on his face—don't know when he'll get through. Guess I'll hev to ketch a chicken and make some broth."

By a small bribe sent to Singular, thus matching his avarice against his laziness, I found the former to over-

come so far that he finished his attentions to the patient in something less than an hour. The housekeeper and I, having finished breakfast, and seen the chicken-broth boiling on the fire, paid a visit to his apartment. I ventured only to the sill, not wishing to obtrude my obnoxious visage. Mrs. Judson looked around on the clean, white muslin curtains, broad fireplace, filled up by two huge iron dogs, high ceiling, wide oaken wainscot, and the rough sketch of Moses in the bulrushes, hanging over the chimney-piece, with evident self-gratulation. Her triumph was ill-concealed.

"Guess you hev'n't slept in such a magnificent place as this 'ere in a good while, if you ever have," said she.

Tomlin's low-toned response I could not catch. Mrs. Judson's reply was audible enough.

"No rats! Course there isn't!" said she. "S'pose he's a-thinkin' of the granary. Wonder he wasn't eaten alive with 'em. Guess he ain't a-dyin' yet. Must be hungry arter hevin' Sing'lar worryin' round. I'll fetch somethin' up stairs."

Matters looked quite pacific, but the promise was deceitful. Some time later, as I was mending Tomlin's clothes, after Sally's washing, Mrs. Judson, with a look of dismay, came down from his room.

"Can't do nothin' with that feller—ugly as Cain—got awful mad at me this mornin'. He said he'd kill me. He caught up the blue chany pitcher off the stand to throw at me. Shan't kerry any more of those blue chany pitchers up there."

"What was it all about?" I asked.

"Why, I was a-tryin', while he was asleep, to slip a piller under his leg instead of the cushion, but he woke up in the middle of it. Most infernal-lookin' eyes he's got. Ben wide awake ever since. Hollers "take care my leg," as soon as I come in the room."

When Mr. Tomlin's gruel was made ready, I accompanied Mrs. Judson to conduct the smaller tray. Her mode of procedure was not remarkably unlike that of many nurses in hospitals with whom I made acquaintance since.

"Now, then," she said, "here's your vittles; if you get mad now, shan't come nigh you agin'. Sing'lar can kerry 'em up, an' Lord knows when you'll get 'em." She seized upon a heavy deal table which she rolled with a tremendous noise to the bedside, jarring the windows, and causing the bedstead to shake from the casters to the cushion on which Tomlin's injured limb reposed.

"Now look out for my leg!" he exclaimed.

"I wasn't within gun-shot of your leg," shouted Mrs. Judson; "I'll leave it to Miss Renshawe. Can't be I hurt his leg a-lookin' at it; can it ma'am? Bed lies on-even. I'll fix it without stirrin' yer leg, ef ye'll keep quiet." She pulled on the pillows, jerked on the bed-clothes, and pushed up the feathers till Tomlin's groans obliged her to desist. Mrs. Judson offered the gruel, propped up the patient's head, and was encouraged beyond measure when he swallowed a few spoonfuls.

"Now, then, Tomlin, ef ye'll jest let me slip this piller under yer leg—won't stir it an inch—be so much easier than that cushion."

"Mrs. Judson, you're a fiend," said Tomlin; "there's no disguising the matter; you're a fiend, sent here on purpose to torment me. God help a man that's left to the tender mercies of such women as I've encountered for the last day or two. Why under the sun can't you let me alone?"

"Well, thar, don't git so mad, Tomlin; you're a spil-lin' the gruel all over the best double-chain coverlid. Poor thanks we get, Miss Renshawe, arter all we've done for that feller—says all the women he's seen for two days is fiends."

I waited for some minutes after Mrs. Judson had gone down, sauntering to the mantelpiece, and examining the labels of the phials, with the view to invite a colloquy.

"Mrs. Judson and you do not seem to agree very well," I remarked, forced to speak first.

"Walks across the floor so heavy," he replied; "shakes the whole house. "My nerves are unsettled, just now, and a little matter distresses me extremely."

"If my presence would not be *too* intense an annoyance," said I, "and you would permit me to carry your food up stairs, and hand you your medicine, I should be very happy to do so."

"I have not the least objection in the world, Miss Renshawe," replied Tomlin. "Surprised you should suppose so."

This was quite amicable. As I was going out, Tomlin spoke again:

"Do you know where my coat is?"

"Somewhere below stairs. Would you like to have it?"

"Most particularly."

Glad to perform a service, though it was a small one, I hastened up stairs with the coat. Tomlin abstracted a large pocket-book full of papers, glanced it over, and placed it under his pillow.

That evening, fearing lest I had been officious in my offers, I remained below until tea-time. Mrs. Judson descended as usual, looking severely annoyed.

"Ef I practice much more runnin' up an' down stairs with dishes, I shall be fit for a hotel. Tomlin won't hev me fetch up his tea, Miss Renshawe; says he spected you'd come."

On this notification I transported the tea things directly up stairs. Tomlin was faint and feverish, indications that caused me no little alarm.

"I wish to say," said he, "that when I am ill I become delirious very readily. I beg you will promise that if my language threatens to reveal anything special you will keep everybody out of the room. More than that, you will take these papers from under my pillow and keep them until I recover. If that desirable event should not occur, you may examine the contents yourself."

"Mr. Tomlin, I hope in some way to atone for my negligence toward you——"

"Oh, ye—certainly—don't mention it. By remembering my requests you will confer on me the greatest of favors."

That evening, after the various excitements of the day were laid at rest, Mrs. Judson held a short dialogue with me in relation to Mr. Shaker's latest guest.

"I've an idee, Miss Renshawe," she began, "that that ere Tomlin is a very genteel sort of a feller."

Some such idea had already occurred to me. I inquired the grounds of it.

"Why, in the fust place, I believe he fairly despises every soul in this house."

I did not look upon this as a particular proof of gentility, but with Mrs. Judson it went a great way.

"Despises us all—maybe not you, Miss Renshawe, though he don't seem to like you much—but he acts, while we're 'round, as though he only stood us because he can't help himself. That's a wonderful dingy-lookin' ring he wears on his little finger. I asked him if I shouldn't scour it up, an' he said no; an' I asked him whar he got it, an' how much it cost, an' he said I bothered him to death. Don't make any bones about speakin' when he's bothered."

About ten o'clock in the evening, when the doctor had gone away, and Mrs. Judson had paid what I supposed

her final visit to the sick-room, I asked her how Tomlin was. She shook her head.

"He's a pretty sick man—seemed a little flighty arter wakin up—thort Elisha was here. Sing'lar's a-goin' to stay thar to-night. Says he ken keep awake enough to give him his medicine—doctor's left stuff for him every three hours."

The next morning I learned from Sally that Mrs. Judson had been up all night herself, and in no little anxiety awaited her appearance to learn the true state of affairs. Mrs. Judson presented herself with the jaded look that would naturally result from a long day's work and a night's vigil. She said on going to Tomlin's room about twelve o'clock, she had found Singular nodding in his chair with the newspaper all on fire in his hands. He was sure he had given the medicine punctually at eleven, but as Mrs. Judson saw that the phials were full, and likely to stay so, she sent Singular to bed and took his place for the night. She reported Tomlin worse, and dispatched Sally for the doctor.

That gentleman pronounced Tomlin dangerously ill, and left a drug to be administered every hour, ordered perfect quiet in his room, and to effect that end forbade everybody to enter with the exception of Singular Twist.

"Sing'lar's nicely fixed now," said Mrs. Judson to me when the day had worn on, and nothing was heard from the second story. "He's got the almanac and a paper of tobaccy, and sets there by the window with nawthin' to do."

"I wonder how Tomlin likes him?" I remarked.

"Don't know. He says to me this mornin', 'Isn't that Sing'lar Twist rather a slow sort of a feller?' Ain't but jest found it out. 'Twas curris he hadn't. I tole him so."

Not daring to violate the doctor's express injunction, I

had wandered by the closed door of the sick-room several times in the course of the day. Just before tea-time I ventured in softly. Tomlin lay wide awake, and very restless.

"You have not been near me all day," he said reproachfully. I promised to come after supper, and having made sure that the papers had not been molested, I went down. I had not gone in because I had feared to wake him, for I supposed, from a very audible snoring, that he was asleep.

"Laws! that was Sing'lar," said Sally, who was dodging about the kitchen when I made this supposition known to Mrs. Judson. "When I kerried up the dishes I hed to pound ever so long on the door afore I cud make Sing'lar hear, to come and take 'em from me."

"Wonder ef he ain't forgot to give them medicines?" exclaimed Mrs. Judson, suddenly. "I'll go up and look at the bottles; thet'll show."

The bottles were all satisfactory. Later in the evening Mrs. Judson reported that Tomlin was very much worse, and owned she had her suspicions of Singular, who looked rather guilty; but as he declared that not a drop of the medicine had been spilled, there was nothing for it but to send again for the doctor.

"It will not hurt him for me to go in, I suppose?"

"Laws, no—he's as wild as a hawk—been a-singing away everything you can think on—Portuguese Hymn and Star Spangled Banner all mixed up."

Tomlin had a high fever, and was quite delirious. He addressed Mrs. Judson as his mother, and me as his sister, fancied himself at sea, and talked in a disconnected strain. Singular's face had assumed its meekest hue. Mrs. Judson eyed him sharply.

"You might as well clear out," said she; "we've hed

enough o' your nussin' for one day. The doctor'll tell us what ails Tomlin fast enough."

Singular withdrew, speechless. It was not long before an urgent knocking at the front door announced the doctor's return. Sally ran up, before admitting him, to tell me hastily that I was wanted below.

Twist stood in the sitting-room with a rueful air of expectation. "Miss Renshawe, think Tomlin will die?"

"It's impossible to say, Singular."

"Think," Twist continued, his heart palpitating audibly as the physician's step sounded in the hall, "that the doctor ken tell, zactly an' sartainly, what ails him?"

"I believe he thinks it some sort of a fever."

"I know—but I mean ken he tell what's got hold on him now?"

"Probably so—I hope so."

Singular shivered; he looked up at the stairs, then at the door, as though dubious which way to go; then, after clearing his throat several times, called to the doctor to ask a minute's conference. This was soon terminated. The doctor looked a little anxious at its close, and after a very protracted call in the sick-room, came down to leave his orders for the night. He was of opinion that Twist, having been up all the night before, would not be equal to the care of the patient again.

"Don't think he will," said Mrs. Judson sententiously, "shall set up myself to-night."

The doctor left minute directions, provisos for spasms and fainting fits, which had not been in his programme originally.

Singular looked vastly relieved when the physician departed. Mrs. Judson lost no time in quieting the house. All were in their several rooms by eleven o'clock, and all probably asleep. There was one exception. I was sad and miserable enough under a new sensation. How

much of Tomlin's illness was due to my negligence of him, I could not determine. How strangely thoughtless I had been not to take him back, and put him under some proper shelter before proceeding to Caney Fork. Then I should have nothing now with which to reproach myself.

I had been sitting a long time by the window—ever since I came to my room, revolving the interest that attached to a man who was a few days before a total stranger, reproaching myself keenly, and wondering whether I could be happy again if he should die. It grew late. There was no sound or sign from his room, and I softly descended.

A low fire was just dying away on the hearth. Mrs. Judson lay back on three chairs fast asleep. The poor woman was overcome with weariness. Tomlin's head had fallen off the pillow, and I saw that he was in a heavy swoon. How long he had lain there it was impossible to say.

A vigorous application of cold water and brandy soon brought him to himself. As I adjusted the pillow carefully under his head he opened his eyes.

"I think I must be very ill to-night," he said, faintly, "are the papers safe?"

"Under your pillow."

"Take them away and lock them up, if you please."

I removed the pocket-book and its contents to my trunk. On my return he asked me to lift his head, and on my compliance swooned again. It was a more difficult task this time to revive him, but it was at last effected. I trimmed the candle, replenished the fire, spread my shawl over the weary woman, and sat down again by the bedside.

"If I die," said Tomlin, so feebly that it was with difficulty I could catch the words, "I want you to go to my

mother, and take her my love and this ring I have on."

"Where does your mother live, and how am I to find her, Mr. Tomlin?"

Silence ensued, and hoping that the query might be answered by the pocket-book, moreover too anxious that there should be no necessity for consulting it, I did not press the subject. Tomlin's face had grown ghastly under the flickering flame of the candle; his pulse was very faint; hands and feet were cold as ice.

"Mr. Tomlin!"

There was no reply, no recognition; the eye was fixed and unconscious. Salts and brandy were exhausted, hot flannels and warm blankets were applied to no purpose; all stimulants failed. A swoon like this I had never seen before. A sudden fear had fallen upon me.

"Mrs. Judson, for God's sake, wake up!" I roused her unceremoniously. "Tomlin has fainted, and I cannot recover him!"

Mrs. Judson was at once by the bedside. "No, you won't recover him again, Miss Renshawe. He's gone, poor feller!"

"Not dead, Mrs. Judson!"

"Yes, been dead some time. Well, poor feller, I hope he's in a better world. Sing'lar must get up now, and go for the neighbors. Don't worry over him, Miss Renshawe, you've done all you could. I wouldn't stand over him that way; you'll catch the fever."

She dragged herself away to call Singular.

Tears, scalding tears, fell on the pillow. Why? He was nothing to me; but dying alone among strangers, it seemed unutterably sad. Dead! Good Heavens! what remorse was tearing my heart! what a recollection to carry through life! It could not be—that passing moment might be worth a million! The thought made me

strong. I deluged arms, and hands, and chest with the stimulating waters, and followed by severe and unremitting friction with the flannels.

"Needn't say nawthin' about the coffin to-night Sing'lar," said Mrs. Judson outside the door." "I'll build up the kitchen fire, and you see that you're back to help lay him out by the time the water's hot."

"I'll build fire fust, July," said Singular affably, as he went down.

"Laws, Miss Renshawe! it's no use a-rubbin' a dead corpse! The breath's clean out of his body, and you can't get it back. It's most one o'clock; we'd better shet up the room and go to bed."

There was no limit to my exertions. Mrs. Judson put her hand on the white, reduced face, and turned away with a significant "humph!" Despair had nearly taken possession of me, when I detected a faint tinge of red in the colorless flesh, and a pulsation so slight, that I hardly dared to trust it.

"Mrs. Judson!" I cried, "his heart is beating!—come back—for heaven's sake let us save his life!"

Mrs. Judson was incredulous. "I'll shake his leg; that'll show fast enough." She gave a ruthless pull on the cushion. Tomlin gasped faintly and half opened his eyes.

"Lord, he is alive, as true as I'm a sinner!—Sing'lar! Sing'lar! fetch all the hartshorn—quick! whar's the camphor. Sing'lar, holler for Sally and Mr. Shaker—all hands aboard now."

The room was soon a scene of confusion. For a long time, in spite of unremitting efforts, the balance seemed wavering between life and death.

"Oh, he is certainly reviving," said Mr. Shaker, in answer to my tremulous question. "He opens his eyes you see, and has quite a color. How do you feel now, my boy?"

"Fell amidships," murmured Tomlin.

"Well, you ain't dead yet, if you did," said Mrs. Judson; "to-morrow you'll be all alive, and cross as thunder."

"Shell I set up here the rest o' the night?" asked Singular feebly.

"No, you jest git to bed," replied the housekeeper, "you've most killed the man, an' ain't satisfied now."

"Julia, Julia," said Mr. Shaker gently, "it is not kind to speak so; Singular has been attending here all day, remember. If my own strength would permit, I would stay here to-night,—and you, my dear Louisa, look very much in need of rest."

"I am quite strong," said I, "and whoever stays, I shall not dare to leave this room again to-night."

"Well, my child," said Mr. Shaker approvingly, "I leave the man in good hands, certainly. My room is across the hall, and should you need help, you can call me. I would not like to have Singular disturbed again."

All withdrew but Mrs. Judson, who remained to confide the indignation aroused by this late charge. "Never in my life," said she, "did I see a man so wizened as Mr. Shaker is by Sing'lar. Ef Sing'lar says black is white, Mr. Shaker swallows it whole. 'Tendin' here all day! Shed think he had! I'll hev' that business clared up to-morrow."

With this declaration the housekeeper gathered up her shawl and withdrew.

All that I had undergone that night in anticipation of Tomlin's death, was painfully present to my mind. The experience of the last few hours had done the work of a year. To be sure that that man would live, I could have been equal to anything—could have confronted any danger. I hardly knew myself. With only one thought, one prayer, that he might recover, I shielded the light

from his half-opened eyes, and motionless as the death I dreaded, with every nerve suspended, watched over the unconscious soul till the gray dawn came again over the hills.

CHAPTER IX.

ENERGETICALLY did Mrs. Judson assail the doctor, to know what it could be that wrought such a change in Tomlin's condition the evening before. That gentleman was non-committal. In spite of all her manœuvres, surmises and innuendoes, nothing could be extracted beyond the satisfactory information, that the patient was better.

The doctor did not manifest the same reticence toward me, but, while weighing some drugs at the table, informed me that Singular had forgotten to give any medicine throughout the day, and, thinking to repair the damage, had administered, just at evening, twelve table-spoonfuls of one dose, and half a dozen of another, not to speak of six pills, all at once. He had not told the doctor through any compunctions on Tomlin's account; but, fearing that the physician would see through his clumsiness, had entreated him to keep the matter from Mrs. Judson's knowledge.

I was vastly relieved, and in view of my late distress was less severe on the real culprit than I might have been.

"And how is the patient?"

"Mind's a little disordered yet; but to-day will decide. Well,"—walking up to Tomlin—"how do you feel, young gentleman? Is your room comfortable?"

"So many birds here; they are flying all over everything—annoy me terribly."

The doctor struck at the imaginary plumes with his handkerchief. Tomlin laughed quietly.

"Ha! ha! you don't suppose they'll let you catch them, do you? They're not such fools. I haven't seen you before. Are you the boatswain?"

"Doing finely," said the doctor to me. "I'll look in again this evening. Good morning."

That day but little progress was visible. The next morning Mrs. Judson woke me at breakfast time, with good news. Tomlin was so much better—had been conversing with her as rationally as anybody could. She had carried up several pieces of the beloved blue china with his breakfast, pitcher included, and had been entertaining him with its whole history, from the time it had first come into the late Mrs. Shaker's possession.

Immediately after breakfast I sallied up to Mr. Tomlin's room. The report was verified. He was a little restless; but his eye was clear and calm.

"Judson says I died last Sunday night," he remarked, on seeing who had entered; "I suppose it's true, as you have spirited away my pocket-book."

I announced the safety of the pocket-book, promised to restore it, and stated that the contents were untouched, in spite of his supposed decease. Tomlin waited with the utmost impatience till I had finished speaking, and called at the top of his voice for Mrs. Judson. She ran in directly.

"Madam, where's my boot?"

"Yer boot? sets thar by the fireplace."

"No, no; the other—the one that was on my lame leg?"

"S'pose it's lyin' among the sheep-skins in the granary."

"For heaven's sake, get it as quick as you can, and bring it right up stairs."

Mr. Judson sped away. Tomlin betrayed some excitement as her stay was protracted.

"She can't find it, Miss Renshawe. Just open that window and see what she's doing."

The housekeeper returned panting with the boot.

"What on earth," he demanded, "made you so long?"

"Only just staid long enough to turn round."

"And how long did it take to do that?"

"Takes some folks longer than others. Now ef Sing'lar——"

"Well, never mind"—Mrs. Judson was just depositing the boot by its fellow at the fireplace—"give it to me."

"Ain't a goin' to put it on?"

"No ; but I want it."

Tomlin caught the article in question from the housekeeper's hand, and deposited it under the farther pillow.

"Head ain't fairly settled yet," said Mrs. Judson, in an undertone to me. "Tomlen, I'm a goin' down stars now, long o' Miss Renshawe. Let's see, yer leg wants to be propped up a little. I'll put the small bag of hen's-feathers under it."

Tomlin waited patiently till she had executed the movement, when he immediately reached over to the little stand and possessed himself of the piece of china-ware regarded by the housekeeper with special veneration.

"Now, Mrs. Judson, the next time you meddle with my leg, or anything that's over it or under it, this pitcher takes a sommersault into the fireplace."

"Oh, Tomlen, take car' ; Mr. Shaker's blue chany ! Thar, I won't, shan't look at yer leg ag'in. Now, then, that's a good feller, hand the pitcher to me, an' I'll kerry it down with the rest."

"I'll take care of the pitcher to-day," said Tomlin, resolutely, as he placed the pitcher beside the boot. "There's my property along with my pistol."

"Well, what shall I tell folks you've got here ; a crockery store, or a leather consarn ?" muttered Mrs. Judson, and seeing no way of reclaiming the pitcher she abandoned the design for the present.

That day, in expressing his pleasure at the settled state of the neighborhood, Mr. Shaker announced that he had received a note from his niece, Miss Edith Launey, and submitted it to my inspection. It was written in a delicate, graceful hand, many words were emphasized, there were several quotations, a postscript, and an N. B. The substance of the letter went to show that Miss Launey's sick relative at Rocky Cross was better, and that if Uncle Shaker would send the carriage for her, she would be happy to make her next visit to him in the afternoon of the following day.

I was quite delighted at this prospect. With a congenial young lady, and, of course, in some points Miss Launey must be congenial, my own enjoyment would be greatly heightened. Anxiously did I await the next afternoon.

Early in the morning I found Mr. Tomlin in a great state of mind. He was very desirous to be shaved, and wanted Sally to go for a barber.

"Won't Singular do ?" I inquired ; "I thought he shaved you a day or two ago."

"I don't want him to shave me again. He was three hours about it."

"Perhaps Mr. Shaker would undertake it," I suggested.

"He did undertake it last night; very kind of him, but when he had cut my face in six places, I thought I preferred the barber."

As there was no such commodity in Blue Hills, I had thought no more about the matter. Consequently, on coming in some hours after, to inquire after his health, I

was much surprised on finding Tomlin propped up with a mirror against a chair in front of him, in the full glory of razor, soap, hot water, and other apparatus.

"Are you trying to kill yourself?" I exclaimed.

"Trying to shave myself. Judson says there's a young lady coming here to-day."

"But you are not to see her, Mr. Tomlin. No stranger will be allowed in this room. You could not bear the excitement."

"And Singular Twist says there's an old crutch somewhere around. I must trouble you to look it up for me. I expect to be down stairs to-morrow, if not to-day."

"People never get well in this way, Mr. Tomlin," said I; "they begin by sitting up a little longer every day."

"Very well—I'm beginning to-day."

I relieved my mind by a consultation with Mrs. Judson. She shook her head on my information.

"He needn't be shavin' hisself on her account," she said; "Miss Launey ain't the girl to take to Tomlin."

"What sort of a girl is Miss Launey?" I asked.

"Oh, she's curis—wonderful notional and particellar. Now you know how clean I keep everything out here in this back settin'-room?" I acknowledged the superiority of the apartment, in the quality second to godliness. "Well, she wouldn't come in here without lookin' up to the wall to see ef cobwebs wus goin' to fall; she would not set on one of these cheers without seein' me dust it off fust, and she wouldn't go through that back door without gatherin' in her dress all round her feet. She's been all over with her aunts, traveled everywhar most—plenty of gentlemen she could hev married since she was eighteen year-old. Wust thing about her is her airs—she has got the greatest sight of airs; yet they all seem natural to her when you've known he a while."

"Is she pretty?" I inquired.

"Laws, no ; nothing like so good lookin' as Tomlen. He's got a wonderful pleasant face, only keeps a kind of thunder-cloud look for times when he's mad or thinks I'm goin' to tech his leg. He'll never like Miss Edith in this world ; more dashy sort of a girl would suit him, an' she won't look at him the second time *I know*."

After this assertion of superior knowledge, Mrs. Judson, with many a sigh, nerved herself to the task of preparing a room for Miss Launey. She and Sally labored all that afternoon in washing, scrubbing, and scouring beyond measure. The housekeeper granted that the room was clean enough before, for ordinary guests, but Miss Edith always made a proviso that her apartment should go through a regular scarifying on the day of her arrival. This process was diversified by one battle between Mrs. Judson and Tomlin, which reached my ears below in the sitting-room. It was soon adjusted, however, for I heard her bargaining for the pitcher again at its close.

"Mrs. Judson, what makes you say 'chany ;' why don't you pronounce your words right. Say china, can't you?"

"Well, chany ; there, now."

"China !"

"Chiney."

"No, no ; china. Say blue china pitcher and you can have it."

I looked out anxiously for Miss Launey's arrival, and at sunset, when I went up stairs to dress for tea, there was still no sign of Singular and his charge. Mrs. Judson came up with a pitcher of warm water, and presented it with a broad grin. The cause, as usual, was Tomlin.

"What were you and he storming about to-day?" I inquired.


"Why, fust of all, he wanted his moustaches cut, an' I s'posed he wanted 'em took orf, so I hacked right in, an'

he said I spiled 'em. Next thing he wanted was the second volume of that ar book he's been a-readin'—Countess Ider, and when I was a-fetchin' it out o' Mr. Shaker's stedly, I let it fall right into Sally's pail o' soap-suds. He did storm away over that like a mad hoss! Didn't venter to say much to him while he's got the blue chany clus to his head."

"And this evening?"

"Oh—jes now? What I'm larfin' 'bout, you mean? Why, I fetched him some photygraphs to look at while the book was a-dryin; and thar was a likeness among em of the angel Gabriel. He's been studyin' it an hour, an' asked me if it was Miss Launey's. Laws! laws! what will he say when he sees her?"

CHAPTER X.

ISS LAUNEY had come. From my window I was her walking up from the gate, noted that she wore a black alpaca dress, which trailed considerably, a dark shawl hanging from her shoulders, and a small round hat such as were in favor at that time; but her blue veil was drawn too closely about her face to enable me to pronounce judgment on anything beyond a very graceful walk and pretty figure. Singular unloaded quite a cargo of trunks at the gate, and Mrs. Judson and Sally Bunn were soon toiling up the walk with those commodities until they were deposited, to the number of six, in the hall.

Mr. Shaker's niece and I were duly introduced at the table. The first glance we exchanged had, however, been one of recognition. A demure smile lingered around Miss Launey's lips, and before many minutes had

passed she asked, with an arch look at me, "Uncle Shaker, do you know where I can find a saddle-horse?"

"You can ride Gusty, my dear," said Mr. Shaker, benignly; "only be careful not to get on a trot, for he is spavined, and whenever you meet carriages and carts, turn way out on the side of the road."

"Oh, my dear Uncle Shaker, I should die on such a horse as that!" Turn out for carriages, and not ride on a trot!"

"Certainly, dear. Don't you always turn out for carriages? and a trot is very ungraceful for a lady."

"Thar's Sunset," quoth Mrs. Judson, who was busily pouring the tea. "Tomlin won't mind Miss Edith's riding him."

"Who?" demanded Miss Launey. A lengthy explanation ensued. The young lady shook her head dubiously "Some wandering man—no, I won't take his horse."

"Sho!" said Mrs. Judson to me when Miss Launey and her uncle had gone up to the latter's study to discourse on some family matters. "Jest wait till she sees him. She hesn't had a beau for two months; been a-visitin', 'mong her old maid aunts—tell you she'll think he's astonishin'. Wanderin' man! Well, well, we shall see."

The next morning Miss Launey occupied in unloading the six trunks, and as she accepted some assistance from me our acquaintance progressed quite rapidly. She was not handsome, but her face could not be called wholly uninteresting. Arching eyebrows and a short upper lip did not add to her amiability. The eyes were very dark, and in some lights black; but the smile was one of the whole face, and though it revealed very irregular teeth, was quite enchanting. Her manners exhibited so many different affectations that it was difficult to say which was most ridiculous.

Tomlin had essayed below in the course of the morn-

ing; but finding that the effort had set his wound bleeding, he had contented himself with the perusal of the Countess Ida in the solitude of his own room for the day. At tea Miss Launey did not appear, and though neither her uncle nor the housekeeper wondered at the delay, I went up to see what had detained her.

"My dear Miss Renshawe, I can't possibly dress under two hours," she said in reply to my appeal through the door. "Mrs. Judson should not require to be told that. Instruct her to prepare the evening repast at eight precisely."

I retreated precipitately, not without some wonder as to where she had been brought up. This information was supplied gratis. Miss Launey talked all the evening about the "Young Ladies' Collegiate Seminary," where she had been for some time a pupil. She had recently paid a visit to that flourishing institution, and her discourse relating thereto was all in a eulogistic strain. Miss Launey owned that Bloomerism had crept in lately, a feature which she could not regard without horror and disgust, though her attachment to the Seminary was as strong as ever.

The next afternoon as the family were gathered in Mrs. Judson's pride, the back sitting-room—the housekeeper and I engaged in sewing, Mr. Shaker discoursing with Singular of Gusty's prosperity, and Miss Launey reading at the window with her head supported against a broad white hand which I had already learned she regarded with much mortification, a clatter on the staircase startled Singular into exclaiming, "Tomlen's a-coming!" and that individual, shaven and shorn, in all the glory of a new plaid flannel shirt and black trousers, hobbled into the room on a crutch which Singular had fished out of the recesses of the granary. Everybody, with one exception, was instant and ardent in attention.

Mr. Tomlin was assisted to a seat by the dresser—pillows, cushions, and footstools were supplied, windows were closed, and drafts regulated till he declared he should be killed with kindness. Edith watched the performance with astonished gaze till the company was settled, and as soon as Tomlin was fairly established with his crutch in the corner, his large dark eyes turned on Miss Launey's face.

"Disappointed," I thought on seeing that he looked indifferently away. I introduced them, perceiving that no one else was going to perform the ceremony. Miss Launey's bow was as distant as it could be to merit the name of a courtesy at all.

"Thar!" exclaimed Mrs. Judson, who had immediately flown up stairs when the convalescent was settled, "I've got the blue chany, Miss Renshaw, without goin' through any college talk either," and she snapped the key on the principal closet with emphasis.

Mr. Shaker entered into a conversation with his guest which soon engrossed the attention of both gentlemen, and monopolized them all the afternoon. As the subjects were chiefly scientific, the female portion of the company could only listen and admire, without assuming to comprehend a sentence.

"Tomlin, ken I hev your hoss?" asked Singular, presenting himself about tea-time at the door. "Want to turn in the cows, an' Gusty's a little lame."

"Don't let him hev the hoss, Tomlin," exclaimed Mrs. Judson.

"I really have not the least objection," rejoined Tomlin. Singular withdrew, and on the subject of the horse Mrs. Judson held forth all tea-time. "Laziest feller in the hull univarse, Tomlin. Jest wants the hoss to ride down to the corner, an' to the foot o' the hill a-drivin' the cows. 'Tain't mor'n a stone's throw."

"I should think," remarked Tomlin, "it would be some trouble for him to get off and take down the bars."

"S'pect he groans every bar," replied the housekeeper.

"Don't get off," said Sally, who was waiting on table with more assiduity than dexterity. "He sets on the hoss an' jumps the cattle over the bars."

"Lord! jumps the cattle—bars—whar *is* Mr. Shaker? Sing'lar—SING'LAR!" The housekeeper upset the teapot, to Miss Launey's extreme agitation, and vanished through the door.

"Now, then, Sally, you see what mischief you've made," said Tomlin.

"Dear me, Sally, bring a towel, quick," cried Miss Launey. "Oh, shocking; and a clean tablecloth!"

When the excitement produced by Sally's revelation had subsided, which it did not under some time, and Tomlin had gone to his room, while Singular was endeavoring to convince Mrs. Judson that the bars were low and the cattle agile, I asked Miss Launey her opinion of Tomlin.

"His personal appearance is very splendid," she replied, "but he does not seem to be used to ladies' society; his manners are rather too brusque to suit me."

Far different was Mr. Shaker's valuation.

"A very sensible, highly intelligent young man," he said, decisively; "modest, too; not the least boasting or swagger about him. I was only afraid he would stay down too late and injure himself."

This favorable opinion went a great ways with Miss Launey, though she informed me that Uncle Shaker was an unsuspecting man, and his opinions were by no means reliable.

She did not appear at breakfast, and the table awaited her for two hours, a state of affairs which Mrs. Judson

pronounced quite usual to Miss Launey's visits. Tomlin was on the settle reading when she appeared, responded to her cool "Good morning," and turned back to his book. After a meal which was taken in a very mincing style, all the fingers not employed in touching toast or teaspoon standing off as far as possible, and considerable rubbing and wiping of dishes with an extra napkin, Miss Launey summoned Sally, bade her "convey away the service," and establishing herself at the window, took a book from my work-table. It was the "Commissioner." *

"G. L. Berkley!" exclaimed Miss Launey; "What does it mean?"

I explained to Miss Launey that the book she held was mine—had formerly belonged to the owner of the name on the cover.

"Dear me! you know him, Miss Renshawe, personally? intimately?"

"Not intimately at all."

"Then, as he is no intimate of yours, allow me to say that Mr. George Berkley is the greatest villain that I ever knew!"

"Why!" I exclaimed, "do *you* know him, Miss Launey?"

"No—at least I have seen him. I never aspired to that circle of society in which he is supposed to move. It may be the most fashionable, but it is certainly not the best. My prejudice against Mr. Berkley originates in his treatment of one of the loveliest girls I ever knew." Edith launched forth into the history of Miss Brandegee's hopeless engagement. "Her wedding clothes were bought, when Mr. Berkley, in the most dastardly manner, forsook her."

I was immediately roused to Berkley's defence, and in

my hands it soon grew warm. Miss Launey listened courteously.

"Well, he's a splendid handsome fellow," she remarked; "I don't wonder at all you defend him; but I must really insist on my claims for Miss Brandegee. I knew her in her educational days."

"What? at the Young Ladies' Collegiate Bloomer?"

"Oh, no; in New York. She was not among my comrades at the boarding school. It was after I had graduated. I merely went there to take lessons on the guitar."

Quite a spirited discussion ensued. In Berkley's behalf my defence grew violent. Tomlin watched the combatants with an air of amusement for some time, and, finding the point in no way of being settled, Miss Launey abandoned it.

"I am very little acquainted with the antecedents of Mr. Berkley's family," she remarked; "I have been told that they are of low extraction."

"Lor sakes!" said Mrs. Judson, who was busily engaged in dusting the shelves of the closet, sacred to the custody of the blue china tea-set; "I kin tell you who they are and all about 'em. I know'd the old feller of all."

"What old fellow do you mean?" asked Miss Launey.

"Why, old Jeff Berkley, they used to call him—wasn't mor'n twenty-five years old, to be sure."

"You must understand, Miss Launey," remarked Tomlin, "the adjective old is used in two senses, one relating to age, and the other to character."

Edith took no notice of this interposition, and Mrs. Judson continued:

"Used to be down round our village, huntin' round thar'; had twenty different kinds of coats, and wore white vests and slippers, and white stoekns. Allus cum to church late, and kep' a smilin' up at the choir, an' allus two or three dogs follerin' him in, an' a gret time turnin' em out. Used to get drunk reg'lar three times a

week. Wall, all the gals thar thort the world of him, runnin' after him all the while. Never was so beat in my life, arter all the talk thar wus about this 'ere gentleman Miss Brandegee was engaged to, as to find out he wus old Jeff Berkley's son."

"You are mistaken," said Edith; "he is General Berkley's son."

"Sartin, ole Jeff Berkley got to be a jeneral. Oh, I know, for yer aunt Launey had her boardin' house only three doors off from 'em, in New York, and we all run to the winder to see Miss Brandegee comin' along the sidewalk. She was so pretty, an' allus dressed so handsome an' fashionable; an' just afore our basement this 'ere young Berkley met her an' stopped to speak to her, an' they stood thar talken a full minute, an' I had a good look at him; I knowd him for ole Jeff's son as soon as I sot eyes on him; and I reckon he patterned a good deal after his father, for they say he gambled away his grandfather's fortin, an' was marryin' her to git another."

"I suppose you know that the gentleman we have been discoursing of, is in the rebel army?" said Miss Launey. The information did not surprise me, and I was gratified to feel that it did not materially affect my spirits, or dwell in my memory.

Mrs. Judson regretted that she had no way of knowing the time. The discussion of the Berkleys had ended, and Tomlin laid down the Countess Ida, and looked up wide awake at the question:

"You've got two clocks here, why don't you keep them running?"

"Runnin'? how can I? Never did mortal woman hev sech trouble with clocks. This 'ere settin'-room clock Sing'lar spiled a-kerryin' up to his room. He got it up the fust par of stars an' sot it down, an' there it sot three weeks on the landin' place, an' finally Sally came along

in the dark an' knocked it over an' broke off the hands. Then thar's the hall clock's been stopped two years afore Sing'lar come here."

"Why don't you have it mended?"

"Hev undertook it. Kerried one clock to Caney Fork myself, an' comin' back, Sam Garniss's hoss run away an' dashed it out an' broke it all to shivers. An' about a month ago, an ole feller came along with a bag of tools, an' undertook to mend the one Sally broke, though I laid it to Sing'lar more than Sally, an' I gave him harf a dollar to fix it, an' he promised me it would run a year, an' afore he'd been gone a harf an hour it stopped agin as dead as ever."

"What did Singular do for a living before he came here?" inquired Tomlin.

"Don't know; sot in the house. Now, Tomlen, you needn't go to takin' down that clock; you'll make wuss work than that ole feller did, an' then we shall hev to get a new one."

"You'll get a new one, won't you, if this is not touched?"

Mrs. Judson eyed him uneasily, protesting he would "spile the clock" for good and all.

In the course of an hour, the clock was replaced on the shelf, ticking methodically, and though Mrs. Judson at first prophesied it "wouldn't last," I noticed that before long she mentioned the hall clock reflectively: "S'pose you couldn't mend sech a big consarn as that is?"

But as Mr. Shaker had given Tomlin a problem, he was too busy to attend to any more clocks that day, advising Mrs. Judson to wait and see whether the little one "ran till to morrow."

"Oh, it will. I know it will. It ticks so nateral."

I noticed during the day that Edith frequently strolled down to the gate to speak to the passers by, and en-

grossed as Tomlin was over a set of compasses and Mr. Shaker's drawing-board, his attention was given to the same circumstance.

"Is that young lady engaged in sending news about the country," he said, "that she makes for the gate whenever a wheel rattles?"

"I presume," I replied, "that she is inquiring about a saddle-horse, as she chiefly accosts the passers on horse back."

At the table everybody seemed disposed for conversation. I began by asking Tomlin how he liked the Countess Ida. Tomlin expressed his opinion that it was a very interesting production.

"How did you like Claude?" Mr. Shaker inquired with interest.

"A very noble character," rejoined Tomlin.

"I am glad to hear you say so," replied our host enthusiastically. "Claude is a pattern, and though dueling and imprisonment for debt are happily obsolete customs, I still wish that book might be in the hands of every young man whose character is forming. Moreover, capital punishment still exists, and one episode in that work shows out the horrors of that lawful enormity."

Mr. Tomlin did not condemn capital punishment. Edith listened with a very supercilious air to the argument carried on with her uncle. From capital punishment the conversation went to murders, and those within the remembrance of the latest generation represented at the table, were discussed. One, whose mysterious and cruel manner had filled New York with horror, received some lengthy comments.

"That was a murder," said Mr. Shaker, "the perpetrator of which I never cared to have discovered. A man who would take the bed from under his dying brother deserved such a fate. It was too good for him!"

All the females at the table joined Mr. Shaker in this condemnation. Perhaps I was rather the most vehement in denunciation. Tomlin looked at me during the progress of my remarks.

"*You're* not throwing stones at that sinner, I trust, Miss Renshawe," said he. "Might you not do the same thing yourself?"

"I! Mr. Tomlin! What can you mean? Not to speak of a *brother*, I am quite incapable of taking the bed away from a dying man, and really hope I always shall be."

"Didn't you take the horse out of a dying man's wagon, up in the vicinity of Rocky Cross, and tell him, when you rode off, that you never expected to see him again alive?"

This low-toned question struck me speechless. I did not open my lips again all the evening. Miss Launey mentioned her wish for a saddle-horse, and had made up her mind finally to send Singular the next day inquiring about the country. I wondered that Tomlin did not offer Sunset; but he was silent. Miss Launey and her uncle occupied nearly all suppertime in talking about a trip to Niagara Falls, in August. Mr. Shaker was endeavoring to induce her to stay through the summer, by the promise of that jaunt by autumn.

"It's the only watering-place to which I have never been," said Edith; but the great objection with me to Niagara is the expense, just now."

"Is it more expensive than any other watering-place?" asked Mr. Shaker.

"Oh, yes—I'm told so at least."

"I have been to Niagara," said Tomlin, "and can't call it an expensive journey—cost me very little."

"You!" cried Miss Launey, her dark eyes measuring the opposite physiognomy with an expression almost of scorn—"no doubt!"

"Why?" rejoined Tomlin, "you don't suppose I go deadhead on railroads, do you, for the sake of my beauty?"

Miss Launey, without answering this remark, proceeded to declare to the table generally, that she had three friends who had been her compeers at the Young Ladies' Collegiate Institute, who went the preceding summer with the husband of one of them to Niagara, and that while there, without buying any baskets of the Indians, they had, being people in moderate circumstances, been forced to expend, during the week of their stay, three thousand dollars apiece!

"They must have been drunk all the time," remarked Tomlin nonchalantly. Miss Launey stared at him for one moment, then bestowed her attention on her plate. She too was silenced, and Mr. Shaker and Tomlin discoursed on surveying till supper was over.

While the younger gentlemen had gone out to look after Sunset's welfare, Miss Launey launched forth: "Uncle Shaker, I don't see how you can endure to have such a man in your house! He is a most unrefined and disagreeable being, to use the mildest term. To speak so of my dear friends and compeers! Dear Uncle Shaker, I can't repeat that horrid expression. He might have said intoxicated, if he was obliged to say so rude a thing at all."

"My dear, I did not consider that rude," said Mr. Shaker; "it was a very natural thing for a person to think, on hearing such a statement; it occurred to me, I confess. He is a very well-informed young man, and I have yet to find that he has done a disagreeable or ungentlemanly thing."

Miss Launey was subdued. "He has never read Cooper's novels, Uncle Shaker, I heard him tell you so."

"Well, Edith, he is not the only young man who has

never read all the books in the world—grand mathematical turn of mind, my dear—I like it vastly.”

I occupied myself throughout the evening in writing to my mother, to Cassy and to Eleanor Ostrander, and as Mr. Shaker had gone to his study, and Miss Launey was reading, Tomlin was left to Singular’s society, in which he seemed to take peculiar enjoyment. Miss Launey was not so engrossed with her work that her lip could not curl whenever Tomlin’s low laugh sounded in the adjoining room, and once she remarked to me : You see what his taste is, Miss Renshawe ! Uncle Shaker will have a second edition of Singular here before long.”

A shutting of doors and general bustle on the back stairs, about ten o’clock, seemed to say that all the members of the kitchen had gone to their beds. As I folded my last epistle, Edith remarked : “If that Mr. Tomlin had been *anything* of a gentleman he would at least have *offered* me the use of his horse, when I spoke of it this evening.”

That Mr. Tomlin moved directly into the sitting room, as soon as these words were spoken. We both looked up, as he hobbled on one crutch to our table. His face, for some reason, was redder than I had ever seen it.

“Miss Launey,” said he, “if you will do me the honor to ride Sunset, I shall be most happy to place him at your disposal. I did not make the offer to-night, because I was led to understand that you had already declined it.”

Edith bowed coldly, murmured something unintelligible, and looked steadily at her book. Tomlin now turned to me, and with eyes of enthusiasm, though in a hurried manner, expressed his deep sense of obligation to the whole household, from Mr. Shaker down to Sally. He hoped that no nonsense he had been guilty of that night had been heeded by me ; he realized perfectly to whom he had owed the preservation of his life, and was the

most grateful of human beings. He feared I had thought otherwise. His warmth of language and manner left his sincerity beyond doubt. I gave him my hand cordially, and Mr. Tomlin and I parted on the best of terms.

Edith had listened to every word, with her eyes riveted on Tomlin's face. She did not speak again until she heard the door of his room close behind him, when she exclaimed with emphasis :

"Ride his horse *now*!—Never!"

CHAPTER XI.

THREE days served to complete Mr. Shaker's captivity. During those three days Tomlin had reconstructed two silent clocks till they kept time to a second, solved a great problem in trigonometry, and two in algebra, which had engaged his host's attention for six months. Mrs. Judson was particularly edified when she found that on Sunday morning he read the Bible studiously, while Edith and I were absent at the village church.

Little as she fancied Tomlin, Miss Launey did not favor the signs of his permanent withdrawal from the sitting-room, shadowed forth in his visits to Mr. Shaker's study, to which seclusion he received frequent invitations ; and to provide for the possibility she determined to institute a course of readings in the sitting-room. This proposal met with universal favor, and Edith appealed to me to select a book. I mentioned Cooper's novels immediately.

Miss Launey took exception. In a family where she had once visited, the most celebrated of Cooper's works had been read, and for a month after nothing was heard

but all kinds of Leather-stocking phrases, and slang words. Tomlin looked at her in astonishment on this observation, and Mr. Shaker was at some pains to convince her that her idea of slang was erroneous. When I hinted to her that Cooper's tales were the best calculated to allure Mr. Tomlin's attention, her objection was withdrawn.

For several successive mornings the readings were kept up, and in the evenings, at which time the housekeeper was most at leisure, and if not the most appreciative, she was certainly a most interested listener. Singular and Sally lurked as close to the kitchen door as they ventured to come, Sally having incurred Mrs. Judson's disapprobation for a late expense in the way of stockings, and Singular having been remarkably shy of her presence since the night of her memorable discovery regarding his treatment of the cattle.

"You were not here last evening to hear Miss Launey read," remarked Tomlin, one morning when I was his only companion in the sitting-room.

"No ; I was not well. How did she read, and what was it?"

"It was the Last of the Mohicans—might as well have been written in their tongue for all I understood of it. Her affectations multiply when she reads—she lisps, and breaks the words short, and runs them into each other, and has a monotonous tone enough to drive an audience wild. Judson sat here laughing in her sleeve incessantly."

"Ye larfed yerself, Tomlen, you know ye did," said Mrs. Judson, who had just brought in the blue china to its weekly visitation of soap-suds. "Lor', she never'd a forgiv' you ; she thinks her readin's some. She practised at the gret Institute las' year."

"I captured the book last night," said Tomlin. "I must read it over before she gets in from her walk. Let

me see, where was it Miss Renshawe left off yesterday?"

"Uncas was jest a droppin' down out o' the cave inter the waterfall," said Mrs. Judson; "two young ladies wus a waitin' thar for the Injins."

Tomlin turned over the leaves leisurely, and Mrs. Judson, in the midst of her attention to the blue china, soon entered into a discourse relating to Miss Launey's past history, detailing her adventures, admirers, and parties, with allusions to the family idiosyncrasies generally.

"They wus all up in a gret boarding-house, up in the city, she and her mother and married sister, and I wus thar, a takin' car' of Mrs. Shaker. She wus sick a good while, and wouldn't hev no one but me, and the house wus full of gentlemen, and thar wasn't many young ladies thar, and what thar wus, wus larfin about Miss Edith, and makin' fun of her the whole time."

"Well, all the young gentlemen thar liked her wonderful. Cur'ous enough, too, for she ain't so very handsome; but they all thought she wus so sweet and winnin' in her ways. And what does she do but goes and falls in love with a young lawyer that wus thar; name wus Golightly. Tell you that man wus to be pitied. Not a minute's peace did he get. She used to foller him round like a dog; in doors and out, and up stars and down, and to church, and all over."

"Well, byme-by one of these gentlemen in the house grew kind of desperate. Name wus Delaware. He wus fa'rly ravin' 'bout Miss Launey—thought she wus so elegant, and so beautiful—perfectly divine; kep a writin' poetry, an' a lookin' melancholy, an' a wanderin' about. Some on 'em thort his brain wus affected. Well, one night there wus a dreadful disturbance. Mr. Golightly wus out that evenin' pretty late, and Miss Launey wus very much concerned for fear he wouldn't get any supper."

‘Now, Mrs. Hobson,’ she’d say, ‘jest let me put down some of those fish-balls to warm for Mr. Golightly’s supper.’ She wus allus a beggin’ for fish-balls to warm for him, for he liked fish-balls wonderful. Well, that night she got ’em; Mrs. Hobson put ’em down to warm at the kitchen fire, and Mr. Delaware wus as black as a thundercloud; and pretty soon, when Mr. Golightly came in, Miss Launey she run down stairs arter the fish-balls, an’ brought ’em up herself on a plate steamin’ hot. And Mr. Delaware wus madder then than ever. He waited till Mr. Golightly finished his supper, and then marched up and put a pistol ball right through his head—blew his brains square out. There wus the dreadfullest commotion you ever saw. Poor Mr. Golightly was carried up to his room, and died in ten minutes. Mr. Delaware was took up and tried for murder, and sent to State Prison for life. Don’t know whether he’s dead or alive now—was a wonderful fierce, bad man; ort to hev been hung, though he wusn’t, cause the jury thort he did it in a passion and was ’scusable. I seen him ill-treatin’ a poor sick dog once, an’ I know I said then that man would do somethin’ to fetch him to the gallers. It’s well Miss Edith found him out as she did. The business most killed her, and to this very day she looks as though she’d committed a murder if any one speaks about sech a thing. I was worried when you wus talkin’ ’bout it t’other night.

“One would think by this time she would hev forgot it most, ben so many love affairs all the time sence. One young man went crazy and wus put in the lunatic asylum.”

“He must have been a little crazy before,” said Tomlin.

“Why, Tomlen, thort you thort she was fascinatin’,” said the housekeeper.

“I never thought she was anything else than a complete mass of airs and affectation.”

"Mr. Shaker tells me," said I, "that her stilted phrases were learned at the boarding-school, and you may have noticed that they are only occasional."

"They are quite intolerable," Tomlin rejoined; "I don't mean her language particularly, but her manners. I hope, for the sake of the community at large, that those remarkable compeers she talks about—I suppose she means schoolmates—do not resemble her."

"Some nice, sensible young gentleman," said Mrs. Judson, "might marry her yet."

Tomlin shook his head. "No sensible man would marry Miss Launey while there was another woman left in the world."

"I've heard men talk jest so," said Mrs. Judson, "and married the girls their own selves, after all."

Tomlin took no notice of this reflection, and turned back to his book. The housekeeper seemed uneasy.

"You wus disappointed when she cum," said she; "you expected to see sumthin' splendid; you took her for the angel Gabriel afore she cum. Don't you remember how you had his photygraph up stairs? Oh, you do remember it, Tomlen?"

"How do you know that was his photograph?" asked Tomlin. "How was it taken?"

"I suppose it wus took somewhar," said Mrs. Judson, looking a little puzzled. "S'pose it's his photygraph; they sell it for one. Guess we'll hev the blue chany out a few days now, so many folks here."

The blue china was arranged on the closet shelves and Tomlin remained absorbed in the book for the rest of the day, to the great chagrin of Miss Launey, who insisted that if people devoured the books in this independent way by themselves, there was no sense in their attempting social family reading at all. As Tomlin disregarded these remarks, Miss Launey grew quite displeased, and

she came down to tea with a frown on her brow that promised no amiability on her part. An attack on Tomlin was first in order.

Names were discussed all tea-time ; mine was admired not a little, and that of Berkley, introduced by Miss Launey, was pronounced highly ancient and aristocratic. I expressed my opinion of Launey, as a very pleasing and attractive name.

"I think it's very, very horrid," said Edith ; "Launey—such a nondescript appellation—I dislike it intensely."

"How would you like Tomlin?" asked the young gentleman opposite.

Miss Launey looked all possible indignation at the innuendo, and vouchsafed no reply. Her intention of never speaking to Tomlin again, was declared to me as soon as we were alone. I wondered Mrs. Judson could be blind to incidents that proclaimed such positive want of congeniality between the two.

"All fairly bewitched about Tomlin," said that respectable female. "Sally, she's took to warin' white stockens, and bort a round cum, and Miss Launey—dear, dear!"

"Miss Launey!"

"Why, yes ; ain't she up now a-dressin' by sunrise every mornin', so's to come to breakfast? Didn't Mr. Shaker say Hello to her the first day she walked in afore we was done, never knowed her do it afore. Oh, when you're fifty year old, Miss Renshawe, you'll think more o' what young ladies does than what they says. Re'lly, it is a goin' so far that I shall speak to Tomlin about it to-night."

This resolution was duly executed. At midnight Mrs. Judson marched into my room with a blazing candle, and woke me from a sound sleep, to report her success.

"Don't know what to make o' that feller," she said grimly ; "I tackled him when he cum from lockin' up

the outhouses, I tole him to look out for his heart, for he would be fallin' in love with Miss Edith as sure as I was alive. He looked at me with them percen' eyes he's got, and says he: 'Do you suppose I can fall in love with Miss Launey, while *Miss Renshawe* is in the house?' I s'pected he'd say that, an' says I, 'Tomlin, I've watched you, an' you like Miss Renshawe, jest the same all the time, but Miss Edith you keep a likin' better all the while, an' ef you keep on you'll be soon in love. Says he, 'Mrs. Judson, you're just like a raven, croak, croak all the time.' So I tole him anyhow, she'd soon be in love with him, an' it would turn out a good deal more seri's than the Golightly bisness, and Tomlin said a more seri's business than that was he couldn't conceive, unless it was a-marryin' Miss Launey. I stuck to it he liked her better every day, an' he said he liked her less all the time, an' went to his book; tole me not to be prophesyin' any more. Dear, dear, I'll give him up—I'll give him up.

CHAPTER XII.

EDITH'S displeasure at Tomlin was quite sincere, and it was openly evinced on the day following that on which the offence was given. Mrs. Judson, who was much addicted to smoking, supplied herself and Tomlin with tobacco and pipes, and the happy couple were soon in the midst of a cloud which rendered obscure all objects in the sitting-room. Miss Launey appeared in the midst of it. Her look of consternation, as she crossed the threshold, testified her disapproval, but she was not long in making it more definitely known.

"I don't know how I can live in all this incense," she

said; "tobacco smoke is extremely disagreeable to me."

Tomlin knocked the tobacco from his pipe, which he laid on the shelf. The housekeeper viewed the motion in dismay. Miss Launey waited for some time for Mrs. Judson to follow his example, then she spoke again.

"Mrs. Judson, if you continue to smoke, the whole house will be impregnated beyond escape; my clothes will be all smoked up, and I shall be unable to extract it from my hair in a month."

"Well, I s'pose I'll hev to shut up shop too," said Mrs. Judson, and with some final puffs, very forcibly drawn, her pipe was extinguished. "Dear, dear, Miss Launey, how much comfort you have broke up."

Utterly heedless of this reproach, Miss Launey moved about the room, opening the windows, and creating a draft that besprinkled the floor with ashes, another circumstance Edith viewed with horror.

"S'pose the fire'll hev' to be put out now," said Mrs. Judson; "never was tole afore not to smoke in this room."

Miss Launey sank into a seat by the window, with her salts at her nostrils. Mrs. Judson's resentment could not be smothered.

"Is Tomlin a-settin' right on the cheer?" she asked; "I see his elbow's on the dresser; didn't know but it ort to come off."

"Come off!" echoed Tomlin.

"I have entirely done with Mr. Tomlin," said Edith, with a look of disdain, at that gentleman, who had not looked up from the pages of the Pathfinder since her entrance.

"He'll be glad of it, I don't doubt," continued the remorseless Judson; "you've nearly hectered the life out of him now. I heerd him tell Miss Renshawe t'other

day, you wus the plainest, humliest, and ugliest lookin' girl on airth—all conceit, and airs, and affection, and humbug, and big words, and he wouldn't marry you while thar wus any woman left in the universe ; an' tole me he'd ruther hev' his brains blowed out, ten times over, than——"

"Good heavens ! Mrs. Judson, what are you talking about ?" exclaimed Tomlin.

"I'm tellin' what you said," said Mrs. Judson, bringing down her closed fist with emphasis.

"Mr. Tomlin," said Edith, rising, and turning to him with a glowing face, "is it true that you said that about me ?"

Tomlin acknowledged it immediately. Edith disappeared with much discomposure down the garden walk. Tomlin reproved Mrs. Judson in no measured terms, for having made him responsible for such a rudeness. Mrs. Judson energetically supported her side of the question. She wus a-doin' it to save him—she know'd his danger. Tomlin said "pshaw !" quite indignantly.

"Now jest see how mad you've got," cried the house-keeper, "and me tryin' to save you from a love affair."

After quite a storm, a compromise was at last effected by Mrs. Judson's promising to let his love affairs alone thereafter.

"What a conceited fool she must think me !" said Tomlin, quite uneasily. "You remember what I said, Miss Renshawe ; if you will explain, it may modify matters a little."

I found Edith on a low seat in the arbor, quite pale and panting with an agitation which was not that of wrath. She started up as I came in, and caught both my hands.

"Oh, Louisa !" she exclaimed, "does nobody like me ? Am I so disagreeable—so affected ?" What can I do—will you tell me ?"

"I will tell you plainly," said I. "Be, as you are at this moment, *natural*! Be yourself, and where others offend, exercise patience."

Edith was quite humbled. She asked my advice in much tribulation. It was easy for her to determine on bearing no resentment against Tomlin. After a conversation of some length she desired me to tell him that she was not offended; but she could not see him again that day. I let her into the house by the front door, and she escaped to her room, while I went to quiet Tomlin's soul.

At tea-time Miss Launey was sent for three times before she appeared. I saw at once that her attire had received unusual care, but the low spirits that had been dominant all the day had left visible traces on her face. Both she and Tomlin were not in a conversable mood, and for some time the sole conversation was carried on between Mr. Shaker and me on the subject of a log-book which had traveled to the Arctic seas, and on which he was quite intent.

"My dear Mr. Shaker," said Mrs. Judson when this subject was exhausted, "thar's that four-acre lot ain't been teched yet, and Sing'lar was goin' to plough it a month ago."

Mr. Shaker looked grieved. "You must remember, Julia, that he has a great deal to attend to, but I will have some of these troubles about Singular explained. Call him in, Sally."

Singular entered with his usual air of repose. Anxious to preserve peace between the discordant members of his family, Mr. Shaker inquired, in a very mild tone, what he had been doing that day.

Singular had been out all day hard at work setting out the cabbages, and making a bonfire. Mr. Shaker looked quite pleased.

"Have the locusts come up yet?" he inquired.

"Lokists?" asked Singular, bewildered. "Never planted none; didn't hev no seed."

"I told you to write to me, Singular, while I was in New York," said Mr. Shaker, gravely, "to tell me what seeds were wanting."

Twist grew quite embarrassed under his master's displeasure. He wrung his straw hat into divers shapes. "Wall, Mr. Shaker, I couldn't get no note paper 'thout goin' to the village, and when we got it we wus laid up on pens, and when I got them the ink-bottle wus all dried up, and did write a letter—wus all done and folded up on the mantelpiece three weeks a-waitin' for a 'velop, and July kep a-promisin' to get it, an' I had cattle to 'tend to and couldn't get it, an' finally I giv it to Sally to post, an' she did, the day afore you got hum, but thar warn't no 'velop on it, an' I s'pect it never got thar. S'pose it's advertised somewhar in New York."

"The four-acre lot, Sing'lar," said Mr. Shaker.

"Wal, the plough-share wus broke—been broke some time. 'Tain't too late. Sam Garniss ain't teched his next lot to plough."

"He tole me," cried Mrs. Judson, "that that lot was going to grass. Now then, Sing'lar—and why ain't the plough-share mended?"

"Took it three times to the blacksmith's shop myself, and it was all shut up," said Sing'lar, vehemently.

"Oh, yes, you went once, 'bout ten o'clock at night, and next time you went the man's mother was dead, and you knowd the shop wouldn't be open, and next time it was Sunday——"

"Uncle Shaker, how can you permit these vulgar discussions?" besought Miss Launey. Mr. Shaker, quite willing to end it, dismissed Singular, and until we rose from the table discoursed the log-book and the Arctic regions assiduously.

"Ef Mr. Shaker thort less about the North Pole and more 'bout his own grounds," said Mrs. Judson to Miss Launey, *sotto voce*, "we shed all be better off."

Edith made no reply. She seemed very sad and retained her seat at the table after the cloth had been taken away. As soon as Mr. Shaker had gone to his study, Tomlin moved his chair across the room, and seated himself by Miss Launey. For some time they were neither very conversable. I soon saw Edith's face brighten, and after a while she grew quite cheerful, and took the principal share in the discourse.

There was one soul that spoke very ominously in asstance glances, and when the young couple had separated it declared itself penitentially thus: "I'd give my Sunday clothes this minit to undo what mischief I've done to-day."

The extent of the mischief was soon obvious. Miss Launey called me into her room as I passed, and talked of Tomlin till after midnight.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOR two or three days I had noticed a book on etiquette about the back sitting-room, and how ever often it was thrust upon the shelf, or laid in the closet, it reappeared unfailingly in a conspicuous place. It haunted the table where Tomlin was occupied, sometimes alone, occasionally with Mr. Shaker. On one occasion the compasses were found inserted at a chapter headed "Behavior to Ladies."

Tomlin had just come in from the garden, where he had been raking up the dead weeds for a bonfire which pile Singular was contemplating through the smoke of his

pipe, and looked about for the problem Mr. Shaker was to leave for his solution. Miss Launey and I were the sole tenants of the room.

"Mr. Shaker has not been down yet," said I.

"Very well, I'll read a short time. Where's the Prairie?"

The Prairie was discovered lying on the dresser with the Book of Etiquette placed immediately on top of it.

"Is this treatise on manners traveling around here for Singular's benefit or mine?" asked Tomlin' as he seated himself to the perusal of the novel.

"It is a subject of the first importance, Mr. Tomlin," said Edith, severely.

A discussion immediately arose. The subject was one which Edith had studied devotedly, and she soon grew not only natural but eloquent. A lecture ensued on the laws of good breeding, to which Tomlin listened deferentially. Edith became desirous of an answer, and proposed a series of anecdotes, declaring that she was sure Mr. Tomlin would think the examples of politeness they enforced perfectly absurd. Tomlin, quite sure of the contrary, at once challenged the anecdotes, and Edith detailed them in full force, with the air of a woman in her element.

In the first place some very great man, she could not remember whether it was Louis Quatorze or George Washington, had, while riding on horseback with somebody else, met a beggar who took off his hat, whereupon the noted individual referred to took off his in return, and on his friend expressing surprise at his responding to the salutations of a pauper, the same noted individual, whether it was the king of France, or the founder of American liberty, replied, "You surely would not have a beggar surpass me in politeness!"

Tomlin pronounced the answer very good—very good indeed.

Miss Launey seemed much pleased, and hastened on:

"In the next place, while the Earl of Stair," (this anecdote I remembered to have seen in Ollendorf's Method of learning German,) "was visiting at the court of France, the king laid a wager with several of the courtiers that he would prove a foreigner more polite than a Frenchman. He was to choose his own time for making the trial, and one day on going to his carriage, with two courtiers and the Earl of Stair, he bade the Frenchmen get in before him. They both drew back, and the king then desired the Earl of Stairs to enter the carriage first, which he instantly did. The king had won the wager."

"Very proper conduct in the Earl of Stair," Tomlin said, "very proper indeed."

Edith, quite illumined, proceeded: "The Duke of Bedford invited a French nobleman to dine with him. The duke lauded a certain wine to his guest; it was supposed to be a hundred years old, and a very superior kind of wine. It was brought on by the duke's order, and the French nobleman's glass was filled with a liquid, very clear, and of the color of gold. The guest drank the wine, and pronounced it excellent. The duke next imbibed. He was in a great state of consternation—summoned the butler, and had the affair investigated, when the supposed beverage proved to be pure castor oil. The French nobleman had swallowed it without shrinking. What think you of such politeness as his, Mr. Tomlin?"

"Oh, very fine, certainly; quite admirable."

"The next anecdote is a circumstance which came within my own knowledge, therefore I can vouch for its truth. A gentleman living in a large village near Boston, saw his neighbor's house on fire one evening, and immediately ran thither to apprise the inmates of their

danger. On entering the hall he found the family all at prayers, and he had the good breeding to control the first impulse of his heart, and paying due deference to the solemn occasion, he waited until the prayers were concluded before apprising them of the conflagration. What have you to say to that, Mr. Tomlin?"

"I was a little staggered by the castor oil," Tomlin confessed, "but this adventure fairly floors me. I must own that if it had been my case, I should have interrupted the devotions."

"Perhaps you have not been religiously educated, Mr. Tomlin, and do not attach proper importance to the ceremony."

"Why, Miss Launey," Tomlin protested, "reverence for religion I certainly have; but this is running the thing into the ground. If I found a congregation at prayers, I would wait at the door till the prayers were over rather than disturb them by entering; but you can't mean to say that if the church was on fire it would not be my duty to go in and tell them what was going on? No, I must say that your last specimen was infallibly a spooney."

"A what, Mr. Tomlin? Do, if you can, use phrases current in polite society."

"Haven't you read Thackeray enough to know what a spooney is? Well, a sort of a flat."

"Oh, Mr. Tomlin, what horrid expressions; and not to know of whom you were talking! It might be some of my nearest relatives!"

"You ought not to make a man commit himself blindly about your nearest relatives," said Tomlin. "Whose fault was it that I gave you my opinion? I really can't change it. The man was a flat!—a confounded flat! I know you think so yourself. You would have thought so if you had been in the house."

"I hope I should never be so severe on the motives of

any one," cried Edith, "and after what you have just said to me, I must really observe that for a man who appears like a gentleman, dresses a little like a gentleman, and might pass among gentlemen as a gentleman, you have the most impossible manners that any one can conceive!"

"Will you be kind enough to pity my ignorance so far as to inform me what the adjective impossible, used in this connection, means? You must understand that I am doing my utmost to profit by your admonitions."

Not noticing this question, Edith ran on volubly: "It really behooves you, Mr. Tomlin, to learn by attention to the laws of etiquette what nature has not taught you. Your utmost endeavors will hardly serve to bring you up to the standard of decency. You talk like an Ethiopian, you act in many ways like an Ethiopian, you laugh like an Ethiopian!"

"You don't mean a nigger!" Tomlin exclaimed.

"Oh," cried Edith, stamping her foot, "don't pronounce that word in the detestable style of Stephen A. Douglas! I do mean, if you force me to say so, a negro. You talk like a negro; you laugh like a negro; you—you——"

"Look like one?" suggested Tomlin.

"Positively after the manners of the aristocrats among whom I have circulated, yours are very distressing."

"I must say," rejoined Tomlin, with perfect composure, "that although I cannot answer for *my* manners, possible or impossible, yet in the circle of society where I was brought up, ladies were not in the habit of calling gentlemen niggers to their faces."

As society was Edith's sensitive point, this remark increased her excitement. She informed Tomlin that she had moved in the first circles—in the very highest ton—

she knew what was *de rigueur*, and *comme il faut*, and *la chose*. She could distinguish a gentleman instantly, and really, she begged Mr. Tomlin would not converse with her any more.

Mr. Tomlin turned back to the Prairie, quite silent. Edith's wrath had charged her usually pale face with a vivid scarlet. She looked as though suffering with the heat.

"If there was anything in the shape of a gentleman here," she said, "I would ask it to bring me my fan. Louisa, will you get it for me from the dresser?"

Tomlin rose immediately, took the fan from Mr. Shaker's drawing-board, and carried it to Miss Launey. She did not take it, and he laid it on the table. Her wrath soon abated, and I saw that she felt into what a ridiculous exhibition its indulgence had led her.

After a short silence, disturbed only by the turning of a leaf in Tomlin's quarter of the room, I felt a hand laid on my shoulder. Edith so far forgot etiquette as to kneel by my side, and whisper a few words with tears in her eyes.

"I am so sorry, Louisa, I lose temper so easily. He certainly behaves better than I do. What shall I do?"

The case was beyond my art, and I would not advise. Edith was sure something ought to be done to repair the evil, and seemingly struck with an idea, she hurried up stairs to dress, and went off in the direction of the village.

I informed Tomlin, after her departure, that there was a prospect of apology and reconciliation.

"It does not signify," said Tomlin, indifferently, "whether we are reconciled or not. Her wrath does not seriously affect me; and I cherish none on my side whatever."

Edith did not get in till late that afternoon, and while

Tomlin was busy over a clock, which one of the neighbors had left to be mended, eyes and thoughts apparently engrossed by the wheels and wires on the dresser, Miss Launey entered, looking quite hurried and tired, and coming up to him unrolled a small package that she carried, and let fall a roll of cigars among the tools.

Tomlin looked up gravely.

"What's that for? a peace offering? It's impossible, Miss Launey."

"You don't mean to say that you decline?"

"I do, very respectfully, and most absolutely, decline," rejoined Tomlin.

I looked up in surprise. He had professed indifference, but resentment spoke in every syllable.

Edith moved away dismayed, to the fireplace, and took her seat with a dejected air. Tomlin's unflagging attention was bestowed on the clock, and as I was at the crisis of Mr. Richard Jones's manœuvres with the horses, with his sleigh half way over the precipice, I was not to be diverted. The trio in the room had maintained for some time a dead silence—the only sound heard emanating from the kitchen, where Singular was preparing a little tea, which refreshment he took about the middle of the afternoon.

I had just discovered that nobody was to be killed, and was perusing the narrative, under the dim consciousness that Edith was miserable, and Tomlin offended, when a crash was heard in the adjoining room.

"Massy!" exclaimed Singular; "the blue chany's broke."

"Not the pitcher," said Tomlin, looking quite anxious.

"No," rejoined Twist, in tones of consternation.

"Taint much better, though; one of them tea-cups. 'Twas full o' hot tea, an' I dropped it."

"Goodness! what will become of us?" said Tomlin,

forgetting all about the clock. "Singular, you'd better go and have the plough-share mended. Stay—don't come back till midnight. I'll sit up and let you in."

"Front door, Tomlen ; she'll be a watchin' at this one."

"Nice you're a-plannin'!" said Mrs. Judson, rushing in. "Now then, Tomlen, arter all I've done for you, to find you in sech a conspiracy, a layin' out with front doors and back 'uns. Sing'lar—Sing'lar Twist! Whar is the feller?" She ran to the window. "Lord! he's *runnin'* : as true as I live Sing'lar Twist's a *runnin'*! Is the sky agoin' to fall, or what?"

Singular had disappeared with uncommon celerity. Mrs. Judson mourned for some time over the tea-cup, and lighting her pipe, her usual solace for trouble, she hurried its odor away from Miss Launey's vicinity. That young lady considered herself at the pass where patience ceases to be a virtue.

"Mr. Tomlin," said she, "if you have not quite exhausted your consideration on Singular Twist, and if all the faculties of your mechanical soul are not too much bound up in that—that timepiece, will you have the great, the extraordinary goodness to lend me your attention for one moment?"

"Certainly, madam ; as long as you choose."

"Then, Mr. Tomlin, is it your intention to smoke those cigars?"

"No ; I would die sooner."

"Die, rather than smoke those cigars?"

"Exactly."

Edith walked up and down the room in a great state of excitement, relieved at last by some lengthy communications made to me in a whisper.

"I've been all over Blue Hills to find those cigars, Louisa, and you see he actually refuses them, and cannot give me a civil answer. I think him very rude."

"Busy with the clock?" I suggested.

"Not too busy to talk to Singular Twist about the domestic convulsion. He's very ungenerous; own you think so."

"He is very good-natured," I replied; "you should apologize."

Edith moved off on this declaration. Tomlin soon looked round for a weight that stood out of his reach, on the shelf.

"Miss Renshawe, may I trouble you for that weight?"

"Goodness!" exclaimed Edith; "with all your claims, you ask a lady to perform such a service as that?"

"I can't let go this string," said Tomlin, "without half an hour's work in consequence. I suppose, Miss Louisa——"

I was half way to the mantel-piece, when Edith sprang before me, caught the weight from the shelf, and presented it. Tomlin adjusted it, touched off the pendulum, closed the clock door, and turned toward Edith. A questioning look at that young lady's glowing features made her penitence unmistakable.

"What will you have, Miss Launey?"

"If we *could* be friends!"

"We can—with all my heart; but, honestly, you need not expect to remodel me; you must take me as you find me. We were brought up on different theories—we can never agree on our favorite doctrines; but we can be friends if we can forswear all debates, and bury those that are gone in oblivion."

Edith instantly accepted the proposal, declared she would never quarrel with him again, retracted her former censures, and as a final triumph made Tomlin promise to "consume" the cigars. They should be the seal to their compact.

"I'm afraid," he answered, "the compact may end like the seal, in smoke."

Edith vowed and protested against such an "odious sentiment;" and the newly reconciled couple were soon discoursing as amicably as ever. I was shortly so engrossed in the pages of the *Pioneers*, as to be oblivious to all that went on for some time. I was startled just about dusk with the intelligence of a new excitement. Sally ran in, breathless, and roused me from my abstraction, to report that there was an awful deal of trouble. Tomlin was looking all over for the horses—Sunset and Gusty both had gone; they were not in the stables, not in the meadows, no sign of them in the street. Tomlin was off at the height of a hill down the road, whither he had gone as fast as his halting gait would allow. Sally ran to carry him the crutch, which had been for some time discarded, and Mr. Shaker came down from the study in dressing-gown and spectacles.

Where was Singular? He was sought vigorously, and while Mrs. Judson was shouting his name about the garrets, I found him asleep in the granary, where he had gone to mend the floor. As he ran out, hammer in hand, nobody could accuse him of not having been busy. The trouble was soon made known.

"Why upon airth wusn't you lookin' arter 'em?" cried Mrs. Judson.

"Wus lookin' arter 'em," Singular asserted; "know'd when they went; know'd arter they wus gone. That ar' hoss of Tomlen's is a wonderful unruly critter, Mr. Shaker. He's pussuaded Gusty off, I know."

"I s'pose he thinks thar's more to eat in the road," said Mrs. Judson. "Come, Sing'lar, why ain't you arter em? Thar's poor Tomlen a limpin' about—sperrets willin' enough, poor feller. Tain't his fault that he ain't five mile away."

"He's too shaller to live," said Singular, sharply; "hosses'll come back; s'pected 'em back fore this. I shan't go arter 'em."

"Well, don't know what we'll do, Mr. Shaker. One's lame, and t'other's lazy—might as well say 'good-bye, John,' to the hosses."

Mr. Shaker was fairly aroused about the horses, but by no means inclined to Singular's opinion that they would come back themselves. Tomlin soon moved up the lawn. Sam Garniss and he were going after the horses immediately. Garniss drove up in a light sulky to the gate, by the time Tomlin had changed his coat, and they were off directly.

Mr. Shaker's mind grew quiet, and after worrying a little while about Gusty, he endeavored to console Singular, by expressing his hopes that the horses would soon be found, and by laying the whole blame on Sunset. Thus spared by his master, Singular grew easy, and looked at the housekeeper with a defiant air.

"Don't see how you're goin' to get the cows into the lot, Sing'lar," said she. "No hoss to ride to-night. Hain't never tole Mr. Shaker how you jumped the cattle over them bars."

"That warn't much trouble for em'," said Singular, stiffly.

"Warn't it? I'd like to see anybody settin' you to jumpin' over bars. How high do you s'pose you'd go? Tain't mor'n this mornin' you said you'd mend that fence, and now you see the horses hev got off, an' you'll hev to pay damages."

"Couldn't mend the fence," said Singular, fiercely; "wus hard to work all day."

"Oh, I know how hard you worked, Singular. You wus all the mornin' a stickin' three rods o' brush in the peas; Sally foddered the cattle, afore you wus up, an' this artemnoon you broke the teacup, an' then you wus done. An' what did you do yesterday, for mercy's sake?"

"Set out cabbages—a hull row."

"So ye did—three in the row; I jest ben lookin' at em. Ef some one don't help you, there won't be a live thing growin' this summer; stuck three plants in a cabbage-bed, all you done yesterday, on the face of the airth."

"Made a bonfiar," Singular suggested."

"Oh, yes—Tomlin wus out here, an' raked up all the dead stuff, and you lit it, an' so you went in afore Mr. Shaker, an' says: '*I made a bonfiar!*' An' ye promised solemn this mornin' you'd mend the granary floor."

"Did mend it, arfter I cum back from the ploughshare business. Didn't you hear me a-hammerin' in thar?"

Mrs. Judson looked incredulous, but as it was too late for inspection without the aid of a lantern, she postponed it till the morning."

Quite late in the evening, just as I was going to my room, I was stopped by the housekeeper, who wore a very disturbed air.

"Thar's some folks at the gate, jest ben inquireing for Tomlin, an' askin' who's in the house; and when I mentioned your name they wanted to see you. It's a lady—queer sort o' folks, I mistrust—said I needn't come out agin."

My curiosity was not a little excited, and I hurried to obey the summons. There was a light open wagon at the gate, to which a single horse was attached; a gleam from a lantern fell upon my face as I came down the walk, and I was greeted in tones that I recognized immediately, as those of my cousin, Alice Ludlow.

"Louise, I hardly thought it possible you could be here," she said; "and I have but a very few minutes to stay." She leaned from the carriage and kissed me.

"How is Mr. Tomlin?"

"Much better," I answered; perceiving that my cousin

had a companion. This was a man wearing a slouched cap, and a high muffler, that covered all but his eyes, though, from his general appearance, I judged he was quite young. He did not speak to me, and I was asked sundry questions about Tomlin, by my cousin—when he would be back, whither he had gone, how long he had been in Blue Hills, and when he expected to quit that village.

When these questions were answered, a few low words of consultation ensued between my cousin and her companion ; after which the former, taking a paper from her pocket-book, delivered it to me, with strict injunctions to give it to no one else but Tomlin, and should he not return, to destroy it.

They were off almost immediately. I stood for some time at the gate, listening to the rapid roll of their wheels, and as soon as the surprise caused by this unexpected meeting with my cousin had subsided, revolving all the suspicious and painful features of the episode, I went back to the house, thinking worse of Tomlin than I ever had before ; or at all events with my mind agitated by the cruel suspense that belonged to suspicion. As for Alice, I could understand her conduct only far enough to reprobate it. Her companion was, as I supposed, a perfect stranger, and I had seen his face only distinctly enough to be haunted with a strange recognition. What would her *fiancée*, Louis Ostrander, say of these singular escapades, if they came to his knowledge ?

The household was not a little agitated in regard to the fate of Tomlin and the horses ; Mrs. Judson wandered about in a continual ferment.

“Hope, they ain’t all smashed up in a heap,” she said anxiously ; “that Sam Garniss is an awful feller to drive ; fetched me once from Caney Fork, and upset three times afore we got to Rocky Cross. Didn’t go no further than Rocky Cross—thort I’d had enough of it—said it

wus a young colt he wus tryin' to break—hope he ain't a-tryin' to break more to-night, or we might not see Tomlin so soon as the hosses."

"Any particular risk about it?" asked Mr. Shaker.

"Sartin, thar is—he's an orful feller with a hoss. I was down on the store steps t'other day, and he cum along, smokin', and wagin' a-swingin' as usual. Store-keeper hollered, 'hello Garniss, whar's yer breechin' strap.' 'Dang the hoss,' says Sam says he, 'that can't keep clar of the wagin!' and away they went, wagin' a-bangin' agin the hoss every step they trotted."

"Why did you not inform Tomlin?" said her master.

"Did tell him, but didn't make any difference. He'd a-gone, I s'pose, in cirkis harness, arter Sunset."

Abut twelve o'clock at night, Tomlin rode into the yard with the horses. Garniss and he had found them up at Caney Fork, where they had been stopped by a farmer's son; they were made fast in the stables, and Singular solemnly promised to have the fence mended by sunrise; and Mrs. Judson declared that not a morsel should he have to eat, until that vow was fulfilled.

"Oh, let him have his breakfast, Julia," said Mr. Shaker, with a shocked air."

"Then 'twon't never get done. No, Sing'lar, I'll call ye to-morrer fore sunrise, an' I'll keep yer breakfast hot till the fence is done."

Tomlin had just come in, as this arrangement was complete. He looked very pale with fatigue, and owned that it had been no easy matter to find the horses.

"That Garniss is a very obliging fellow," he remarked; "got out his horses and did not stop to eat his supper, I shall not soon forget it."

"He ought to receive some acknowledgment," remarked Mr. Shaker.

"Might send him a harf a dollar," suggested Singular.

"We'll send you with it to-morrer," said Mrs. Judson, angrily ; "half a dollar ! wonder what you'd think wus pay for sech a tramp?"

I took advantage of the excitement, of which this speech was the signal, to apprise Tomlin of my cousin's visit, though I did not mention her name. Tomlin expressed his thanks, as he took the papers, and my suspicions were laid to rest in a great measure, by the coolness with which he regarded the incident. I said the lady particularly desired to see him.

"It is quite as well," replied Tomlin. As he left the room I saw a strange look upon his face, that served to disturb me again. No soul, not ill at ease could have lent such an expression to the features.

The next morning I heard Mrs. Judson clattering at Singular's door by early dawn, and after some scolding back and forth, I saw him leisurely plodding his way across the cornfields. After breakfast, Mrs. Judson saved a decent amount of steak and potatoes, which hissed away in the frying-pan for a goodly time. At last they were put on a plate and consigned to the stove oven ; but as there was no sign of Singular Twist, Mrs. Judson's heart at last relented, and she went to remind him of the breakfast, of which he had been so oblivious. There was no sign of Twist in any of the lots, in the street, or in the out-houses ; what was more, the fence had not been touched.

Sally had gone up in the course of the morning to Garniss's with a sum of money, and on her return, she stated that Garniss refused the reward. "Course, know'd he would," said Mrs. Judson, slapping the money on the shelf ; "now then, Sally, you've got to put on yer bonnet agin, an' go look for Sing'lar. He's sleepin summers about town:"

"He's up to Garniss's," said Sally in a tone of wonder.

"Sot thar eatin' breakfast when I went in; wus a tellin' over some yarn 'bout how we starved him. Everybody thar wus up from the table, and he sot crooked over drinkin' corfy. Wus in a hurry, guess, hadn't took his straw hat orf."

Mrs. Judson's emotions were too powerful to enable her to threaten vengeance. She sank back in a chair, and lifted both her hands.

"Starved! well, of all things! an' beggin' his breakfast to Garniss's! Never in my life did I see anything, or anybody to match Sing'lar Twist."

CHAPTER XIV.

WITH all the household Tomlin rapidly increased in favor, and that member of it by whom he was held in special esteem, was Singular. By that individual he was extolled to the skies; for, as Mr. Twist's chief horror was that of doing anything, his gratitude was evoked in the most signal way by sundry small chores with which Tomlin employed himself throughout the greater part of the day, such as mowing the lawn, trimming the vines, and harnessing Gusty, all which, Singular declared, saved him a "powerful deal of trouble." Mrs. Judson was no longer in despair over the garden; Tomlin had promised his energies in that quarter, with the only stipulation that his share in its prosperity should not be made known to Mr. Shaker; and the housekeeper, over whom he exercised great influence, reluctantly consented.

"Mr. Tomlin seems to have advanced in your good graces," I remarked to Edith during the day on which

Twist breakfasted out. "I see you were talking to him this morning in the summer-house a long time."

"Yes; we have been discussing what that wretched Mrs. Judson calls my whims. I opened the subject, and it has had a delightful termination. I am to be cured of them."

I asked how a consummation so much to be desired was to be brought about.

"Why, Tomlin says it is nothing more than that I have a mathematical turn of mind, and that if he had daughters he should train them all up to study mathematics. He analyzed my desire to see everything at proper angles—chairs square against the wall, people square on the chairs, and tables square with the people. I said it was so; a thing which is three-quarters of an inch crooked, unsettles my nerves. Tomlin says it is because I am tied to elementary principles. For his part, one angle is as beautiful in his eyes as another; and his greatest pleasure is in watching the multitudinous angles in nature; for instance, in passing through a forest, the angles made by the trees are as countless as the sands of the seas. He thinks that if I will but study conic sections, I will be so partial to curves, that I will admire all kinds of positions and shapes, to the same extent that I now do proprieties. I suppose I shall see a problem every time Mrs. Judson sets the table at cross-corners."

"And is Tomlin going to teach you conic sections?" I asked.

"First geometry, which I have studied a little, and conic sections afterwards. He is going to bake some clay cones in the sun, to give me practical illustrations. I thought clay was not very nice, but Tomlin says as we were made out of the dust of the earth, I should not cavil at it."

The first lesson was given that very evening. Miss Launey had some superficial knowledge of geometry, and it was difficult to decide whether the master or pupil was more deeply interested in the business in hand. I soon saw that, though they disputed nearly all the evening, they had chosen the best imaginable plan to promote a full and final reconciliation. For some days I left them almost altogether to themselves, and pursued my usual avocations in the summer-house, where Miss Launey feared to stay, on account of the insects which alighted on the vines. It was scarcely less pleasant in the back sitting-room. East and west windows stood open from dawn till candle-lighting, admitting the mild breezes of spring; and the bees hummed all day about the hive, in close proximity to the window.

The first rainy day that silenced the bees and banished the zephyrs, forbade me the summer-house; and for the hour that Edith's lesson lasted, I was a tenant of the sitting-room. I busied myself in attempting a sketch of the group, and in the mean time gathered, from the progress of remarks, that the course of the lessons had not run smooth for the last few days.

"I trust I shall not try your patience too severely this morning, Mr. Tomlin," Edith began; "I have been studying by myself."

"Then you are all primed with letters, of course!"

"I must learn by the letters, Mr. Tomlin. We went all through Euclid, at the Young Ladies' Collegiate Institute, and *always* attached the letters to the demonstration."

"Well, the Institute settles the point, of course. You may recite the forty-seventh proposition."

Edith went through it with a fluency that I thought must delight the soul of any teacher.

"I am only speaking for your own sake, Miss Edith,"

said Tomlin. "This sort of thing is of no advantage to you—all wasted time. You might as well recite a Latin epic without any idea of the signification of the words. You won't get into the cones in a year."

"Mr. Tomlin, you are really very discouraging! I have studied very, very hard all the morning."

"I know you have ; you have lavished on these problems three times the study that would enable you to understand them perfectly, and your knowledge of them is hardly preferable to Singular Twist's. I'll prove it immediately. There's the forty-seventh without the letters : indicate the lines and angles with your pencil, and proceed."

Edith fidgeted considerably. "I'll say the whole proposition without the diagram, Mr. Tomlin, if I may say it with letters. We never had diagrams at the Young Ladies' Collegiate Institute. Our teacher used to tell us to keep the diagrams in our minds."

"The more I hear of that remarkable Institute," said Tomlin, "the more I am inclined to wonder that the young ladies graduated with any intellects left. You didn't keep the diagrams in your mind, and if you will attend to me closely, I'll endeavor to insert a few into that receptacle."

Edith riveted all her faculties : Tomlin explained and re-explained for two hours with the most commendable patience. Edith listened with an anxious face.

"Recollect," said Tomlin, in conclusion, "you are never to think of these letters again, except so far as necessary to learn the lesson. By the way, you need not tie yourself to a stated task like a school girl. Why don't you progress faster?"

"I have so little time, Mr. Tomlin."

"What becomes of your time these long summer days?"

Edith enumerated : She rose at six, was dressed for

breakfast by seven. After breakfast she directed Sally in putting her room in order. That occupied till ten o'clock, when she took her first lesson. From eleven till twelve, she slept; from twelve till one, she dressed for dinner. After dinner she strolled out a little while, then studied for her next recitation. At five o'clock, she always went to dress for tea—a duty impossible to perform in less than two hours. Her evening employments were various, and known to the household.

“I hardly know,” said Tomlin, “how to suggest an alteration in such a routine; but I should think if you could curtail your directions to Sally, something might be gained. If you were my sister, and I had therefore the right to advise, I might add, that two or three hours taken from your toilette and spent half in study, and half in hay-making, would be of advantage, mental and physical.”

“Hay-making!” cried Edith.

“Yes, or hoeing. There is that bed of beets, outside the garden gate, in which Singular pulled up exactly sixteen weeds yesterday, at Mrs. Judson’s instigation. It has been an eye-sore to me for a week, but I am hardly strong enough to attack it yet.”

Edith thought it wise to pass over these suggestions in silence, and withdrew with her books.

Tomlin opened a conversation with me:

“Four hours out of the blessed day spent in putting on clothes and braiding hair! It sounds incredible!”

There was more silence, after which came a sober question: “Miss Renshawe, is it your opinion that there is anything going on under this roof that deserves the name of flirtation?”

“Only what goes on over the drawing-board,” said I, laughing, “and that seems to be conversation and study intermixed. What sort of a student does Miss Edith make?”

"She tries very hard ; but she has no brains," Tomlin replied, "at least none for this sort of thing."

Remembering his remark on her mathematical turn of mind, I was wondering whether it was her mistake, or his disappointment, when Tomlin resumed :

"You are an impartial looker on ; I want you to promise, that if you see matters progressing to the dignity of a love affair, you will inform me at once, that I may put myself beyond the reach of danger."

"You don't mean by leaving, Mr. Tomlin ?"

"Certainly."

"Then it's very short-sighted in you," said I, laughing, "to depend on me for a warning, after giving that as a consequence. I shall be very blind to anything that threatens to send you away."

Tomlin turned to me with more earnestness and warmth of manner than I had ever seen in him before.

"My sister—my dear sister," he said, "if there is a woman in the world on whose sense and discretion I have reliance, it is you. I know, if you give me the promise I ask, you will certainly keep it, though the fulfillment should conflict with your wishes more than it is likely to here. I say to you, in all soberness, I am not in love with that girl, and have serious objections to becoming so; at the same time I may not be able to judge for myself before long, and I ask one who is a candid and impartial spectator to judge for me."

I was a little touched by this address, and though unable to respond so cordially as to call Tomlin my brother, I was not insensible to the compliment paid by the adoption on his part.

"Why need your staying here insure your falling in love with Miss Launey?" I asked.

"Because, if you shut up any man in a hermitage with a young girl, a love affair is inevitable. People as

dissimilar as Miss Launey and I by daily intercourse grow congenial. I beg you won't imagine that I think Miss Launey in any danger of succumbing to the evils of the seclusion—not at all; I have not the presumption to suppose it; but she is very much of a coquette, among her other faults too numerous to mention, and it is quite probable that *I* may be in danger. I like her better than when she first came. I really don't dislike her affectations; I am quite reconciled to the 'compeers;' find myself with a vocabulary of her pet words, and besides all that I think she improves in looks."

"That is the most alarming of all," said I.

Tomlin seemed thoughtful. "I have heard of men falling in love with capricious scholars, and rebellious scholars, and idle scholars. Whether a man can fall in love with a stupid scholar or not remains to be seen."

The next day Miss Launey surprised the whole family by working for three hours at the bed of beets, during Tomlin's absence at Garniss's. She refused to accept any assistance either from me or from Sally; it was all to be her own work. She came in at last, flushed and triumphant, but after an hour in her apartment reappeared in consternation.

"Mrs. Judson, what is to be done about my hands? Only see how they are soiled!"

"Siled? Looks like stain. Better wash 'em."

"Wash them! I have been washing them for an hour with every brand of soap in my box!"

"Shouldn't hev thought you'd a-handled them weeds, without gloves on," said Mrs. Judson. "Don't know what you will do."

"What does Singular do to extract these fearful juices?" asked Edith with a face full of concern.

"Sing'lar? Laws, guess he hain't pulled up so many weeds in a year as you have this mornin'."

Miss Launey appealed in despair to Twist, who sauntered in at the moment. Singular looked as sympathizing as possible, and then said he did not know; guessed it would "war off."

"Wear off! Terrible!" exclaimed Edith. "Can't you suggest anything, Singular?"

Singular said "thar was lemin-juice would take off some stains. Didn't know whether it was good for poke-weed stains or not." Miss Launey tried lemon juice to no effect. Singular's resorts were at an end. He thought Tomlin might know something about it; better wait till he came home.

Miss Launey wore gloves all the evening, and devoted herself to her uncle's botanical works with a face of despair. Mrs. Judson called my attention to the late demonstration significantly.

"Never know'd her do such a thing afore in my life, Miss Renshawe, as work in a beet-bed. She's fairly gone crazy. Didn't get much consolation from Tomlin about her hands. He tole her it would certainly wear off in seven years, for everybody had a new skin by that time. She don't like to hev him maken fun of her. She's detarmined on hevin' his heart, an' it'll be gone afore he knows it."

Whatever might be Edith's design on Tomlin's heart, she was apparently the most devoted of pupils. Her application, now that it was rightly directed, was attended with a marked result. She owned to me that she had no great taste for the study in hand. If it had only been some foreign language; German, for instance, and they were reading a German novel together, how much finer it would be.

I had resolved not to be unmindful of Tomlin's injunction, consequently I stationed myself for several mornings in the sitting-room to gain a just idea of the

state of affairs. I decided before long that whatever might be the danger Tomlin had feared for himself, Edith was, of the two, in the most unenviable frame of mind.

She watched every look and motion, listened attentively to every word he said, and her recitations were faultless. Moreover, when the least interruption occurred her annoyance was intense. And interruptions were not a few. Mr. Shaker was constantly coming in with the log-book to ask some explanation of signs and degrees; Sally was all the time bringing some report about the horses, or hens, that took Tomlin off to the stables or poultry-yard. Miss Launey's indignation was marked by Tomlin with a quiet amusement that spoke well for the calmness of his soul; nevertheless, I fancied that he was flattered by the exacting nature of her behavior. One morning the annoyance on her part rose to a higher pitch than usual. Mrs. Judson had just rushed in, carrying a piece of carpet about two feet square.

"Whar's Sing'lar Twist?" she demanded, tumultuously.

Singular, who had been whistling and whittling for some time outside the window, presented his enticing physiognomy at the same. "Oh, thar you air, Sing'lar. Now, then, didn't you tell me you'd mend the granary floor? Didn't you promise an' vow so solemn you would? and hevn't you only spread down this piece of carpet over the hole, an' I jest fell in an' like to killed myself, hey? What'll Mr. Shaker say to such mendin' as that, hey? Tell you I fell right down into it."

"Wall," protested Singular, "what are you allus a-goin' along in such a hurry for? S'pected ye'd look under the carpet afore ye stepped on it. You're allus a-smashin' about, and a-breakin and a-smashin'!"

"Oh, yes, I broke the blue chany, didn't I, Sing'lar! Mr. Shaker's blue chany tea-set."

"Ye talk as though I'd broke the hull set," said Singular, resentfully; "never broke but one tea-cup."

"Well, ain't that a breakin' the set?" demanded the housekeeper. "It's eleven cups an' sassers, an' one odd sasser. Ef that set ain't broke better git the pitcher an' dash that, too."

Miss Launey had with difficulty commanded her temper; at this juncture she lost patience. "Mrs. Judson," she said, "have you nothing in the world to do but to run about with carpets! You have shaken the dust all over my dress. Throw it out of the window, and send Singular to his business if he has anything to do."

"To do? I shed think so! Ain't thar the four-acre lot? Tell you what——"

Singular started up, and jammed on his straw hat. "I'll start now an' burn the swamps over."

"Oh, sartain; you ken strike a match anytime. Don't you want Tomlin to help you kerry it?"

Singular was heedless of this sarcasm, and moved off in the direction of the swamp-ground. This day Miss Launey did not appear to succeed so well with the recitation as usual. Tomlin was in a mood that she always found provoking.

"What does the cosine equal?" he had inquired. She did not know.

"You know that the sine divided by the tangent equals the cosine. That you knew yesterday. Now, what does the cosine equal?"

Edith shook her head. "I don't remember, Mr. Tomlin."

"I don't ask you to remember; I only ask you to reply. I've made it so plain that Mrs. Judson could answer it."

"Mrs. Judson!" said Edith, indignantly.

"To be sure, we'll test it. Mrs. Judson——"

"Oh, Lord! don't ask me none o' yer jigenometry,"

said the housekeeper. "I never steddied beyond the rule o' three in my life."

"No matter for that." Mrs. Judson listened with a broad grin, while Tomlin put the question.

"If the sine divided by the tangent equals the cosine, what does the cosine equal?"

"Ekils the sine divided by the tangy," said Mrs. Judson.

Tomlin looked exultantly at his pupil. Edith grew quite indignant.

"I did not know you were trifling with me when you asked the question. I suppose I could have said if two couples are four, four are two couples; but I supposed you were trying to teach me something. At all events I was trying to learn; and if you think I know less about trigonometry than Mrs. Judson, perhaps I had better not try any more."

She rose quite indignantly, and gathered up her books. Tomlin stopped her, to disclaim all intention of trifling. Quite a lengthy discussion ensued. It ended more amicably than usual; and Miss Launey actually forgot the demands of her toilet till it lacked fifteen minutes of dinner-time.

Availing myself of the moment that Mrs. Judson had gone to summon Mr. Shaker to table, I leaned from the window, outside which Tomlin stood regarding thoughtfully several clay cones baking in the sun, and said in a low tone:

"You asked me to warn you when I saw danger at hand."

Tomlin looked at me gravely. "Don't tell me so yet."

"Is she not handsomer to-day than yesterday?" I inquired. "Are you not beginning to understand Mr. Delaware's infatuation?"

"I own it appears more luminous than formerly, Miss

Renshawe, but a rival is necessary to develop it. However, you may say to Miss Launey," he continued, in a flippant tone, "that if she does not want a second edition of that affair on her conscience, she must take care not to warm fish-balls for anybody but your humble servant. I'll forgive Mr. Golightly because he's dead, but that must be the only exception."

"She is older than you, Mr. Tomlin."

"That's nothing."

"She was engaged to that Mr. Golightly."

"That is still less."

Mr. Shaker's step was on the stairs. I hastened to speak, for I knew that Tomlin might not be in the mood to listen readily again.

"Then," said I, earnestly, "by the dread of all that awaits you, if this affair continues, whatever issue it may take, I appeal from Tomlin drunk to Tomlin sober. Go."

Tomlin looked up. "Will Mentor be kind enough to throw his protégée off the rock? Deeds, not words, will serve me now. You have spoken well, Miss Renshawe, but it is too late."

CHAPTER XV.

QUITE an agitated appearance was presented by Miss Launey when she ran in, an hour after dinner, in the second toilette of the day. Something new was on the eve of development.

"Never mind my dinner now, Mrs. Judson, I must see Miss Renshawe and you a little while. In the first place, where is Mr. Tomlin."

"Why, he's gone down the lot. Sing'lar's sot the

swamps afire, and they've burnt clear over the four-acre lot, and got up into Garniss's fields, an' there's a dozen men there a-tryin to put it out, an' Tomlin's afeard Garniss's barn'll git afire. I heerd ole Garniss a-swarin' clar up here."

"Well, Mr. Tomlin won't be back very soon, will he?"

"Laws, no; not this four hours. Ef they git the fire out by supper time they'll do well."

"Louisa, I have made a most awful discovery about Mr. Tomlin! Don't tell her, Mrs. Judson. It's what you told me this morning. Let Miss Renshawe guess."

I guessed everything I could think of in considerable alarm. None of my surmises were correct.

Edith lowered her tone. "He has been a *sailor*!"

"Is that all?" said I, laughing. "Didn't you know it before?"

"I *might* have known it," replied Edith. "He was so absorbed in those sea tales of Cooper's that he could not be divorced from the books. For three whole days he was intent on them—liked them better than the other novels. Did you not notice it?"

"I thought him more interested in the Spy," said I. "It is strange that you never knew he had been a sailor."

"No, I never dreamed it, but that's not the matter in hand now. What did Mr. Tomlin bring to the house—what garments?"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Judson, "except what wus on his back."

"Positively nothing?"

"No. When I fust seen him in this house, the day arter that Good an' his company staid here all night, he had on an ole gray flannel shirt an' black trousers. Never knowed he had a coat till he got hurt up to mother's, an' some one hauled it out o' some closet. Seemed to think

more of his boots than anythin' else. Goin' to make him some clothes, Miss Launey?"

"Nonsense, Mrs. Judson. The clothes he has on now must have been somewhere then?"

"Dry goods store at Blue Hills," said Mrs. Judson.

"Miss Renshawe cut 'em out, an' Sally an' I made 'em."

"What is his Christian name?" asked Edith.

"Sam, or Jim. Which is it, Miss Renshawe?"

I did not know. Edith unfolded a handkerchief with a narrow vine on the border. "Did you ever see that before, Mrs. Judson?"

"Never. Mr. Shaker don't hev borders on his handkerchiefs, and Sing'lar Twist's is red silk. Must be Tomlin's, I s'pose."

"J. B.," I said, looking in the corner. "That stands for John Brown."

"It's very mysterious," said Edith, gravely; "don't you think so, Louisa?"

"No. Tomlin has probably exchanged handkerchiefs with some man of those initials."

"That I might allow," said Edith, "except for one circumstance. The other day he was drawing diagrams, added some flourishes in an absent way, and at last was about to affix his name. He wrote a J. first, then a B, and an R just following; but he recollected himself suddenly, and stopped."

"That justifies my surmise," said I. "His name must be Brown."

For additional evidence, Edith examined Mrs. Judson. That worthy dame had very little to tell.

"Don't know nothin' about his secrets," said she; "he's tattooed on his left shoulder with an anchor an' two letters—not J. B., but H. J."

"Are you sure, Mrs. Judson, as to the letters?"

"Sartain. Must hev been H. J., for I asked him what they stood for, and he said Highlow Jack."

This explanation was quite satisfactory, and Edith's suspicions returned to J. B. She determined to investigate the matter soon, and determined to press Mrs. Judson into the service. A long conversation was held between them, of which I heard nothing, and I waited with all the calmness of a disinterested spectator for the issue of the trial.

I gathered that it was to take place that night, but Mrs. Judson was too full of her usual cares to betray any excitement beyond what they might legitimately call forth.

Mr. Shaker had been commending Singular for his industry in having set out a whole bed of onions that very forenoon. Mrs. Judson asserted that Singular loved onions even more than he did sitting still, and that they should have been in the ground more than a month ago. When Singular was heard in the kitchen, he was called on to answer a new charge.

"What's been the matter with the hens to-day, I wonder?" said the housekeeper.

"Sing'lar shet 'em up in the henroost," said Sally Bunn.

"Sing'lar, Sing'lar Twist, what for did you shet up the hens?" demanded the authority of whom he stood most in awe. They've been a-cacklin' all day long."

"Let 'em cackle," quoth Singular.

"Well, what did you shet 'em up for; can't you tell?"

"Feared they'd git in and scratch up the onions," said Singular.

"Why ain't you stopped up the fence?"

"Hadn't nothin' to stop it with."

"Well, do you s'pect to keep them hens shet up till the onions hev' grow'd?"

"No. I only shet 'em up while I could git the brush spread over the onions. S'pect I shall hev it got by to-morrer."

Mrs. Judson groaned; but her groans on the score of Singular were so usual as not materially to affect the household.

Tea was unusually late that evening, and Mr. Shaker, who was not very well, retired to his room before the rest of the party had risen from the table. This party consisted of his two fair protégées, and Tomlin. Mrs. Judson, sitting opposite her master, poured tea on all occasions for both tables. Singular and Sally occupied low seats behind the stove, never speaking above their breath, except when Twist whispered some commission to Sally, which he was too lazy to execute himself.

After Mr. Shaker had withdrawn, the conversation, though from what source I did not notice, turned on necromancy. Mrs. Judson's belief in it was apparently strong. When she was a young girl she had gone to several fortune tellers, and had been assured by every one of them that she was destined to be a widow with one son. One had told her she would be married twice, but the second husband had not yet made his appearance. Another astrologist, in his prognostications, had assured her she was to have a great deal of trouble. That was as true as the Gospel.

"You tell fortins yerself, don't ye?" said Singular, from his darkened recess.

Mrs. Judson said, with apparent reluctance to verge on this branch of the subject, "I've tole a few." Miss Launey was at once all animation.

"Dear Mrs. Judson," she cried; "tell ours now; I am so anxious to hear mine! Here's my hand to begin with."

"Oh, I can't tell 'em off hands," said Mrs. Judson; "I had a pack of cards once, belonged to a fortune-teller,

all spread over with red dragons, an' flyin' devils, an' sech. But I tell 'em best off tea-grounds."

Miss Launey's eagerness was scarcely restrained. She hurried round the table to inspect the tea-pot, and asked questions with a spirit which lent such brightness to her features that Tomlin's eyes were riveted. Mrs. Judson uttered a little mummerly over the tea-pot, lifting the lid thrice, and turning the vessel around as many times in the course of the incantation.

"You'll have your fortunetold, won't you, Mr. Tomlin?" said Edith, with a pleading look.

"Yes ; if you care to hear it," said that gentleman, indifferently.

"Certainly, we do. Show Mr. Tomlin how to manage his cup, Mrs. Judson."

"Take car', Tomlin!" cried Mrs. Judson, as though the matter was one of life and death ; "you're pourin' all the dregs out o' the cup ; must let 'em spread on the sides. Don't tech your spoon to it ; let it go nateral. Now put it upside down on the sosser, an' turn it round three times, an' make a wish about sumthin'."

Tomlin handed the cup to Mrs. Judson. It was inspected with all due solemnity, while the spectators were all mute in rapt attention.

"Thar's a lady in the wish," announced the oracle, "and the wish is a comin' to pass."

"I shall be surprised if it does," replied Tomlin ; "I wished that Gusty might unlock the stable-door in the morning, and harness himself to the box wagon."

Mrs. Judson was a little disconcerted. "Shedn't tell yer wish, Tomlen ; nothin' comes to pass when you've tole of it."

"Go on, Mrs. Judson," said Edith, eagerly.

"You've ben a sailor," continued the housekeeper. "The men at sea used to call you High-low Jack ; you've

got some friends a long way from here, and there's plenty of money among 'em, too."

"It would be pleasant if they were not so far away," remarked Tomlin. "What next?"

"You've got a sister—one sister—can't tell whether thar's any more or not ; but yer father has been dead some years."

"I had not heard of it before," said the subject of the oracle, "and it must be his ghost that I've taken for him three or four months ago. What does the infallible cup say further? Is my mother married again?"

"Your mother's name isn't Tomlen," pursued Mrs. Judson.

"Then she must be married again?"

"Your father's name isn't Tomlin."

"Isn't, nor wasn't?"

"Isn't or wasn't—never was."

"That's the strangest announcement yet," said Tomlin. "Make the tea leaves clear up that matter, Mrs. Judson ; give them another shake ; perhaps they'll tell what my father's name was, as well as what it was not."

"Thar's a B in the cup," was the next proclamation.

"Dead or alive?" asked Tomlin.

"Not a honey-bee—a B in letters."

"Perhaps," said I, glancing at Edith, "that stands for Belisarius."

Tomlin turned sideways with the table, taking a rung of Mr. Shaker's vacated chair for a footstool, supported his elbow on the leaf, and shaded his eyes with his hand. Mrs. Judson proceeded.

"Seems to be more than one letter here : thar's a T, and a J, and a B, here. T don't seem to be much—thar's a good deal more Jim than thar is Tom. How's that, Tomlen?"

"Go on," said he.

"Thar seems to be quite a family of 'em ; all B's, and you wus born at sea. Is that so?"

"What makes you ask *me* if it's so?" answered Tomlin ; "Can't you decide that yourself?"

"You're going on a long journey."

"Laws !" exclaimed Singular, with more vivacity than I had supposed him capable of ; "I hope he ain't a goin' away from here."

"Sing'lar, you jest keep still ; s'pose you don't want him to go ; how you do bother and put out ! Whar did I leave off ? Oh, it says next, and the plainest thing of all, that thar's sumthin' very heavy on your mind, and you're haltin between two opinions."

"You treat entirely of the past," said Tomlin ; "I'd like to hear about the future."

Mrs. Judson shook her head. "The future's black," said she ; "you're goin' to do sumthin' you'll repent of, very soon. It'll make you no end of trouble. Why, Tomlin, you'll cuss yourself for it. The journey you'll go on before long, and you'll go much easier than you'll come."

"That is usually the case with all my journeys," said Tomlin, as he removed his hand from his face, and I fancied that he was paler than usual.

Edith's cup was tendered next. I soon saw that the young lady had not prompted this part of the prophecy. Mrs. Judson assured her that she was in love.

"The gentleman's very good-lookin'," she said ; "got brownish hair, an' wonderful percen' blue eyes, an' light mestaches, an' he's five feet ten inches an' a half, an' he's tattooed H. J., an' he war's flannel shirts, an' black——"

"Mrs. Judson !" I exclaimed, seeing that Edith was struggling for voice to interrupt, "do stop. Miss Launey does not care for so explicit an oracle. The tea-grounds can't give the hero's eyes and inches."

Edith could only look her thanks. I handed my cup to the housekeeper. Probably in order to do as much for me as for Miss Launey, Mrs. Judson informed me that I was very much in love with a gentleman who did not as yet return the attachment.

"If I knew where to find him," said Tomlin, "and could have an hour's conversation with him, he would not remain insensible to Miss Renshawe's merits, through ignorance of their existence."

With this parting compliment, Tomlin left the table, and drew back to the chimney-piece, where he stood gravely in the shade, and after a few words to Sally, he quitted the apartment.

"What did he say, Sally?" questioned Miss Launey, who had seemed very restless during the communication.

"Wants me to do up his white shirt, and have it ready for to-morrow mornin'. Thinks of goin' visitin' somewhar, I guess."

Edith seemed disturbed. A clatter in the kitchen soon after, caught Mrs. Judson's attention. She opened the door.

"Tomlin, you here a lightin' the dark lantern? What's that for?"

"Tell Singular to come out immediately—there are thieves in the hen-roost." He vanished through the outside door.

"Sally," said Singular, "run up to my room an' fetch down my black coat, while I light my pipe. I'm feared my white shirt 'll skeer the thieves."

"Go 'long out, Sing'lar," shouted Mrs. Judson, administering a strong impelling motive; "don't you want to skeer 'em. Tomlin's gone all alone; they may kill him for all you know."

Singular was urged on his way, while the excited females gathered at the door of the kitchen, to learn the

result. Outside all was darkness and confusion, except where the spark from Tomlin's lantern lit his way. The hens kept up a vehement cackling. Mr. Shaker's voice was just audible from an upper window, asking what was the matter ; and Singular had barely passed the well-pole, when the loud report of a pistol sounded at the scene of disturbance.

"Laws, I hope Tomlin's other leg ain't shot," said Mrs. Judson, "or there'll be another month's job of it."

Tomlin's voice, calling to Singular, was next distinguishable. Some indistinct bustle ensued at the granary, and Singular, turning around deliberately, remarked to his auditors at the kitchen door—"I heerd a screech."

Mrs. Judson, who had taken up the broomstick as a weapon of defence, leveled it at Twist with so direct an aim, as to cause him to quicken his pace. We waited for some moments in anxious suspense, till the glimmering rays of the lantern on the path betokened that some intelligence awaited us. In the meantime, Mr. Shaker had made his way down stairs, in his dressing-gown, anxiously asking the cause of the trouble.

"Some half dozen robbers arter the hens," said Mrs. Judson ; "and Tomlin's out thar seein' to 'em. Singular's crawlin' round somwhar."

Singular soon appeared. Tomlin would be along directly, he said ; he was only talkin' to somebody out at the fence, and the sound of two voices confirmed this report, as well as the stationary gleam of the lantern, which was poised on the distant fence. It was Tomlin's pistol that had been fired. We were all impatient for his reappearance, and the door was thronged by an anxious crowd, till a hasty step sounded on the pathway, and Tomlin, extinguishing the lantern, came in, and led the way to the back sitting-room. He stated that, having heard a commotion at the henroost, he had gone out to

see what was the matter. Two men were making off with a double prize of live hens. Tomlin had called to them to drop their prey, but the call being utterly disregarded, he had discharged a pistol. He thought one had been wounded, but at all events both of them had dropped their booty, and made off. He was not of opinion that they would trouble the henroost again that night.

"Who wus that ar'," asked Mrs. Judson, a-talkin' to you at the fence?"

"That was Elisha," rejoined Tomlin.

"The zwave Elisha? you don't say so!" she exclaimed; "why didn't you ask him to come in?"

"He could not come in," answered Tomlin; "he was here with a message to me."

The late incident was productive of all the excitement natural in any family whose peace had been disturbed. Mr. Shaker seemed to think that something extra should be done. He even said, that if he were not so very much afraid of taking cold, he should bring down his blankets and sleep on the settee. The conversation was carried on collectively by every one but Tomlin, who stood reading a letter at the table, and Edith, who sat regarding him attentively.

"Does it not strike you," she said to me in a low whisper, which the others were too engaged to notice, "that Tomlin is offended with me?"

I had not noticed, but Edith, who seemed much perturbed, came up to him, the moment the letter was finished, and asking to speak to him, led him through the hall to the piazza. As soon as they had gone, Singular, with a very anxious look, after shutting all the doors, raking the fire, shaking his head and sighing heavily, declared that he was sorry to say it, but something in the whole affair had a very bad look.

Men didn't run out to henroosts so sudden, exposing

their lives to save a few hens! 'twarn't human natur! and then what on airth was Tomlin out thar at the fence talkin' so long to a man for, and if it wus the zouave Elisha, why hadn't he come in?

"Sho!" ejaculated Mrs. Judson; "ungrateful creeter you air, Sing'lar; arter all Tomlin's done for you, to talk about him that way. S'pose his life to save hens! sartin he would. Hesn't he gone out in the pourin' rains to save the little chickens from gettin' drowned, and put 'em in baskets behind the stove agin and agin? Hasn't he fed 'em ever since they wus hatched, and spent hours teachin' 'em to go up into the roost o' nights, instead o' flyin' on to the cherry trees? Who shed like the chicken's ef tain't Tomlin? and ef you've fed or sheltered a chicken for six weeks, my name ain't July Judson."

"Wall, thar now, woman *talk*," said Singular, sitting up straight in his chair, while his eyes sparkled under the broad brim of his straw hat. "Ef Tomlin's fed an' basketed all the dyin' chickens in North Ameriky, it don't hender what I'm a-sayin'. No, nor it don't neither. And what I'm a-sayin is, fur a man to hear hens cacklin' an' walk right inter a roost all full o' deadly robbers, an' fire pistols, an' talk to a man at the fence, an' say he shot two men, when nobody heerd the hens, or seed the thieves at all, I say it's queer, an' so it is, darned queer."

"An' whose fault was it," cried Mrs. Judson, "that nobody seed the thieves? Ef it hadn't been fur Tomlin, every hen in the roost would hev ben kerried farther than you'd ever a-gone arter 'em. Dear knows I shoved ye along as far as sech a tawtis *could* move, and why wan't you thar I say, helpin' pertect the property?"

"Well thar, don't holler so," rejoined Singular; "Tomlin's just outside thar, whar he'll hear it all, an' I don't want him to know that I'm suspicionin' on him. Only I say, I went as quick as I could, an' not a mortal thing

did I see, except him talkin' to some feller at the fence."

Mr. Shaker's grave look was noted by Mrs. Judson with rising indignation, but Tomlin and Edith came back too soon to give her any time for her favorite's defence. She looked unusually grim at the author of the mischief. "Go lock the outhouses, Singular," she said; "see ef yer too afraid o' yer shadder for that: an' Sally, ef Mr Tomlin's asked you to do anything for him, why ain't you at it?"

Sally disappeared. Twist had risen, but as Tomlin volunteered to lock the outhouses, sank back into his seat. "Well then, Singular, go to bed," said Mrs. Judson, and as Twist looked rebellious, she whispered some private sentences, among which, some threats connected with the cattle, bars, china tea-cup, and four acre lot, were all I could distinguish.

Singular vanished with a crest-fallen air, and when Tomlin returned from his tour of inspection at the outhouses, Mrs. Judson officiously handed out from the closet the Conic Sections, Hutton's Recreations, and the remains of a huge clay cone which had undergone much mutilation.

"Mr. Tomlin does not give me any lesson to-night, Mrs. Judson," said Edith, gravely.

Tomlin intimated that he would be very happy to give the lesson, but Miss Launey drew away. Tomlin did not press the matter, and the books lay unopened on the table. A constraint seemed to have fallen on the whole party. Mr. Shaker sat with an undecided air, looking uneasily at Tomlin; that gentleman's gravity was quite equaled by Miss Launey's. Mrs. Judson was grim, and after volunteering one or two remarks, scarcely answered. I partook the general silence.

"Help! help!" was suddenly called from an upper window; "July, Tomlen, fetch a light—come quick—quick."

"Laws, what's got hold o' Sing'lar?" exclaimed Mrs. Judson.

Tomlin caught the light and ran up stairs, followed by the housekeeper. Mr. Shaker shook like an aspen leaf. Edith and I were considerably agitated. In the commotion up-stairs, nothing could be heard from below, and we could only bear the suspense as patiently as possible.

"Tomlin is in league with some outsiders," Mr. Shaker burst forth at last. "I shall charge him with it when he comes down. Stop Edith, don't detain me, it is my duty to go up, child; they may have killed Julia and Singular both, by this time."

Steps sounding above, promised to end the suspense. Mrs. Judson's voice and Tomlin's laugh were reassuring. Mr. Shaker looked quite bewildered as they came down together as composed as usual.

"Did you find him—the man—where was he?" he asked.

"He wus under the bed," said Mrs. Judson, stiffly. "Boots stuck out a half a yard. Tomlin hauled hold of his heels, an' we pulled him out and killed him; vest wus full o' knives an' daggers. Don't know what would hev' become of Sing'lar."——

Rendered quite tumultuous by these ironic observations, Mr. Shaker demanded more forcibly what was the matter.

"Only a wasp that Sing'lar smelt—didn't sting him; he hollered afore he was hurt."

This explanation had come none too soon for my comfort. Mr. Shaker had just been looking daggers at Tomlin, and though the fact had escaped the young gentleman, Mrs. Judson had noted it.

Edith came to my room as soon as I had gone thither, to give me the details of her conference with Mr. Tomlin. Her opinion that she had offended him was not a mistaken one. Mr. Tomlin had acknowledged at once, that she was quite correct in the impression. If she had any

curiosity connected with him, why had she attempted to satisfy it in such a roundabout way? If she wanted to know any more about him than she knew already, she might have come to him to discover it. He could see no excuse for her conduct at all, except in his firm conviction that women were made for intrigue.

Edith was moreover sure that Mr. Tomlin would never have laid the matter so heavily to heart, if there had not been something concealed. She thought he was some officer of rank, or state official in disguise.

"Perhaps he is the Prince of Wales," said I.

Edith was fully persuaded that he was not James Tomlin. Her reason was given as conclusive. "We have never heard of any Tomlin, Louise," she said, "and such a man as he is, has made a name somewhere. Think how much he knows, and what he can do!"

"Yes," I said; "think of the three clocks, and all the chickens! He will make his mark in the world."

Edith shook her head solemnly, but wasted no farther argument in favor of the disguise.

Tomlin was the last one up in the domicile. Either solicitude for its safety, or some more selfish motive, kept him on inspection, and it was after midnight when he passed my door.

CHAPTER XVI.

MRS. JUDSON made an early appeal to Mr. Shaker's better nature. Early the next morning, she assailed the quiet of his study, and their conversation was plainly audible to me through the open doors of the upper hall.

"Wouldn't hev" Tomlin know how "Sing'lar talked for anything," she said. "Most ongrateful feller! I couldn't

forget it, ef anyone had done so much for me! Jest consider, Mr. Shaker! Ef Tomlin was in league with thieves, why did he light a lantern, an' call Sing'lar, and fire a pistol? I wouldn't be so tied to Sing'lar's button-hole, Mr. Shaker."

"Singular is very valuable," said Mr. Shaker earnestly, "and this past month, especially, he has been of incalculable service to me; you must have some gratitude towards him, Julia. Only consider—he has close-mowed the lawn beautifully, and tied up all the bushes, and staked the young trees. The place really looks like fairy-land."

"Now, cried Mrs. Judson, "hez that feller imposed on you so shameful as that, Mr. Shaker? I'm jest goin' to expose that man! For the last month Sing'lar has done nothin' on earth but lounge in the kitchen, and chaw tobacco. Ef he hears you a-comin' he'll go to overhauling the wood in the wood-box, or fussin' on the shelf, as though he jest stepped in a-lookin' for suthin'; but not a tree, nor a strawberry-bed, nor a thing in the garden, from one end to t'other, hez he teched, nor a hoss nor a cow, nor a hen, nor a hen's nest, nor a hoe, nor a water-pail, nor an airthly thing in any outhouse or granary, or cow-house, or stable. Miss Renshawe was sayin' only yesterday how he made her think of one of the Easy's fables, whar Tiberus Cesar ran roun' the garden with a waterin'-pot every time he saw his master comin.' That's as much Singular Twist, as though 'twas writ for him."

"Who has done it, pray?" asked Mr. Shaker, astonished.

"Why, Tomlin!" shouted Mrs. Judson with emphasis, "ever since he's been able to get out of doors! Sing'lar's nicely set to work to be abusing Tomlin, I think. Oh, Mr. Shaker! sech things as I could tell you about Sing'lar, only I promised Tomlin I wouldn't! but if I don't say nothin' of that I will speak up for Tomlen; an' I say, Mr. Shaker, that I never know'd anybody that was better.

He helps me every airthly way he can. He's a gentleman, every inch of him. It ain't this drivin' fast horses, an' shootin' of swallers an' robins, makes a gentleman, Mr. Shaker; but it's yer nateral born gentleman, that comes an' takes the pail from an old woman like me, an' kerries it, an' that's all the time a-thinkin' of everybody else, an never of himself, an' that's the sort of gentleman he is ; I don't care if he hasn't two cents in his pocket."

"Why, Julia," said Mr. Shaker, "you need not try to point out Tomlin's good qualities to me. I know them all—many more than you see in him."

"Then if you see more good in him than I do, Mr. Shaker, it's very surprisin' you listened to Sing'lar, an' that you know you did. You'll hev to choose atween Tomlin an' Sing'lar, Mr. Shaker."

"Choose!" cried Mr. Shaker, "why, Julia, there can be no choice between them. They are not to be mentioned together! Tomlin is quite superior to Singular."

"Superer to Sing'lar, wal—I shed think he was!"

"Listen, Julia, I am about to tell you why. He is an educated man, and he has quite a mechanical genius—his skill in mathematics is really surprising."

"And thar's the clocks, Mr. Shaker!"

"Yes, you probably think more of the clocks than the problems. It is only natural that you should. Of course, Tomlin is quite beyond comparison with Singular ; but I was influenced by Singular because, although he is very slow, his intuitions are marvelously correct. He understands something of human nature."

"Wal, Mr. Shaker, ef ye'll excuse me, I'll jest say he don't. He takes his own natur for key, an' winds up everybody's clock. Mr. Shaker, the biggest rogue I ever seen, was all the time a-tellen' how much he knowd of human natur, and he never would believe that anybody on airth would tell the truth whar it advantaged 'em to

tell a lie; and he stuck to that for a principle, an' never would trust the honestest man breathin'! An Sing'lar Twist could not see into it, nor over it, nor round it, how Tomlen shed go into that henroost, just 'cause he hadn't the pluck to go himself! An' then sot by the fire an' tole how 'twan't human natur 'cause it wasn't his'n. Mr. Shaker, thar's honest natur, thar's dishonest natur, and kind natur, and unkind natur, an' it may be all human natur; but thar's no judgin' one man's human natur by another man's, for thar's a thousand kinds of human nature. What's more, all the steddyy on airth will never larn human natur—it's *observation* you git it by, an' it's different in every man you meet; and 'cause you ain't like another man an' ain't got the key to his natur in yer own, its unaccountable to you what he'll do next, an' you can't tell, unless you've seen him tried."

Mr. Shaker had listened quite patiently to this harangue. The housekeeper leveled another shaft.

"Then thar's all yer books that Miss Renshawe saved for you, up to Caney Fork—an' she thinks Tomlin's magnificent. How she'd feel ef you thort he stole hens?"

Mr. Shaker was fairly exasperated.

"Miss Renshawe, I know, thinks well of Tomlin; and the dear girl did save my books, as I shall never forget; but if she had never seen Tomlin, it would not alter my opinion of him; and that opinion of him is good, Julia! Stole hens—nonsense! I never thought any such thing! A man thoroughly versed in conic sections, navigation, and surveying, steal hens! You are more absurd than Singular!

"Then what made you give him sech black, suspicious looks last night? Mr. Shaker, if you'd a-thort he was dealin' with Satan you couldn't a-been more overcast. And we heered you say somethin' when we was comin' down about league with robbers. Mr. Shaker, the way

you treated him last night hurt his feelings, I know, though he said nothin' about it."

"Well, I was misled for a few minutes, but I will endeavor to atone to-day. I assure you, Julia, he needs no defence from you; I am growing more attached to him daily, and if he will consent to remain here through the summer, I shall propose to adopt him for my son."

"Yer son! Laws, Mr. Shaker, it's too late to be talkin' that way. He's a-goin' away to-day. Just told me so down stairs."

"Going away! What! No—impossible! He can't leave in this abrupt way. I have had no warning!"

"Warnin'! You don't pay him a salary, do you? He thinks he's been a burden to you. I s'pose he thort—"

Mr. Shaker drowned the rest of this speech by a hurried putting away of books and audible mournings. Mrs. Judson retreated with a low chuckle, and muttered, "Ain't a bit sorry for you!" as she descended.

The news she had just communicated filled me with regret. I came down as soon as possible. Mrs. Judson was busied in preparing breakfast, and I hastened to the garden, where Tomlin was raking a small patch of freshly moved earth, at which he had been busy for an hour.

"Are you going to day, Mr. Tomlin?" I asked.

"Yes; you've resigned guardianship, and I must take refuge in flight. You are a faithless Mentor, Miss Renshawe. Here's your Telemachus in the toils of Calypso, and you regard his fate wholly unmoved."

"If Telemachus is so well able to save himself, he does not need my counsel. But you leave the garden all planted, Mr. Tomlin. You should stay to put in the successions; everything will come at once."

"I know; but Judson says she will sell all that is going to waste of the first crop, and buy of the neighbors later in the summer."

Mrs. Judson called us to breakfast, and we went in. Mr. Shaker seemed quite overcome by remorse. His attentions to Tomlin were unceasing. Too much could not be done for the departing guest, nor could his merits be too highly exalted. Edith seemed quite miserable. Singular had relented on the news. He walked about sadly, and declared that he could not tell what he was going to do without Tomlin—what Gusty was going to do—what the chickens were going to do.

“Chickens was allus a-flockin’ arter his heels every time he stepped out,” said Singular, “an’ Gusty’ll miss him powerful!”

“It’s your fault he’s a-goin,” said the housekeeper.

“Oh, no,” exclaimed Tomlin. “I belong to the army, and my furlough is nearly out, that’s all. Elisha brought me word last night; and I must go to Baltimore a few days before I rejoin my regiment.”

For two hours that morning Tomlin remained steadily in the garden—at ten o’clock closed the gate for the last time. I fancied, as he stood contemplating the scene of his late labors, that some regret was visible in his face, whether in the prospect of leaving the garden to Singular’s mercies, or by reason of the associations it called up. He gathered up spade, rake, and hoe from their poise against the fence with a nervous hand, and consigned them to the granary as though he expected they would not soon be disturbed. He threw a handful of corn to the chickens, watched them as they picked it up, and only stopping at the kennel to pat the dog on the head, sauntered into the house.

“Come arter some fire to light my pipe,” said Mrs. Judson. I stood leaning from the window. “Tomlin, ken you rake me out a coal?”

“I can light a match,” replied the young gentleman, as he struck several on the hearthstone. Edith came out-

side the window. At first glance she thought me alone in the room. Mrs. Judson was quite out of sight, and Tomlin's position concealed his presence.

"You don't seem to partake the general sorrow," I remarked, seeing that she appeared quite calm.

"Oh, Louisa, can my face so belie my heart? Not a soul in the house is so unhappy as I."

"Take care, Tomlin, you burnt my fingers!" exclaimed the housekeeper. Edith colored deeply, and walked off to the lawn with the gait that was usual to her states of perturbation.

"I am sorry I burnt you, Mrs. Judson," said Tomlin, apologetically. "I must speak to Miss Launey a minute."

"Very pale, and quite deliberate, Tomlin followed Edith to the gate. At that point they stopped, and a dialogue, which did not lack the feature of earnestness, ensued. The housekeeper noted the interview with marked uneasiness.

"He can't be such a born fool as to go to making love to her *now*, can he, think, Miss Renshawe? I must say that if ever I seen a woman detarmined to entangle a man, it's Miss Launey."

I remained very thoughtful on the subject till a step outside the window called my attention. Tomlin was coming up. The look he gave me was a revelation.

"You have not asked her to marry you?" I exclaimed.

"Yes—I really could not go without it."

"But you have not obtained Mr. Shaker's consent?"

"I am going up now to obtain it. She's going to manage the rest. She has a dozen or more uncles and guardians. Miss Renshawe, I await your congratulations."

"I will congratulate *her*, not you," I said, impulsively. "My honest sentiment is that you are throwing yourself away."

"Thank you," replied Tomlin. "You may see the sacrifice spared as it is. Where's Mr. Shaker? In the study?"

Tomlin was in the study some time. When the interview was concluded he found me waiting to learn the result of the application.

"It's a desperate case now," said he, with a smile. "Mr. Shaker gave her at once with his benediction; but he is in that frame of mind in which he would part with half his library if I asked it."

"Where is your Dulcinea?"

"Gone to dress for an interview with me. You may take my arm up to the woods in the mean time, and I'll have a cigar before she reappears."

We walked back and forth for some time, as I did not care to lose sight of the house, lest Edith should return and find her lover away.

"I did not ask if you object to walking with me in this coat," said Tomlin, "but you care less for externals, I believe, than Miss Launey does."

"Did she speak of a coat, Mr. Tomlin?"

"Oh, certainly, she's sensible to the last. She told me I should not have proposed in my old coat."

Edith's toilette was made in fifteen minutes, and I resigned my companion.

"Tomlin seems to hev a faculty of bewitchin' the females somehow," said Mrs. Judson to me. "Sally gives up to a cryin' fit every time I mention him, an' Miss Edith—really, between you an' me, I think she's out of her head. She's put on the very best dress she's got, an' her dimond earrings, an' thar she's settin' on the bench under the maples back o' the garden, talkin' over somethin' very particular. Got her best lace pocket handkerchief, too, a techin' it up to her eyes. Couldn't hardly credit my senses."

"Not feeling at liberty to proclaim the engagement, I asked what she thought of the chances of its taking place.

"I suspicioned that they were engaged," said Mrs. Judson, "but I can't really think Tomlin would be such a fool. He's young, an' likely-looking, an' smart, so Mr. Shaker says, an' she's aggravatin' an' full o' notions. What sort of a wife would she make for him? Why, if I wus he, I'd rather marry Sally."

The happy couple remained undisturbed until dinner-time, when Edith was obliged to spare her lover to other eyes. She appeared the most insensible of the company to the approaching calamity. Perhaps I did her injustice, but it seemed that the sorrow which she did manifest was mainly forced for the occasion.

Tomlin left as soon after dinner as he could gather together the few articles which he intended to take. The remainder were bestowed promiscuously through the family. Some private adieus were Edith's portion, on which the parlor door was closed; and by after tokens I judged that her lace handkerchief had been called frequently into requisition. Tomlin took me aside before bidding adieu to the rest of the family.

"I have one request to make of you in parting," he said; "it is simply this: that whatever hard things may be said of me hereafter, wherever you hear my name mentioned, you will suspend your judgment until you can give me an opportunity for self defence."

I promised to heed this charge, and Tomlin continued:

"We have lived here so quietly for the last month, that I have not realized until this time how highly I regard every member of this family. To your faith and courage I am indebted for my life; in acknowledging that debt I can only say, that if you need a friend, or rather a brother, I beg you will remember who would serve you; and if

we never meet again, you may know that one man lives, who holds your interests as dear as his own, and who will bless you with his latest breath."

After this conference, Tomlin hurried to bid the rest of the family farewells of a more racy character. Before I knew it they were over, and he was soon disappearing down the path to the village, where Sunset had been stabled since the unlucky day of his escape with Gusty.

Tomlin left behind him saddened hearts. Edith retired to her room to indulge her melancholy, Mrs. Judson's apron was at her eyes, and Sally, hiding her head behind the table, sobbed outright.

"Kindest hearted feller ever lived," said Mrs. Judson. "Kissed Sally an' me too, when he went away."

"Tole me to take care o' the chickens," said Sally, "an' so I will. Ga-me me silver dollar, an' I'll bore a hole in't, an' wear it roun' my neck."

"Lef' me his coat," sighed Singular. "Dear, dear! s'pose I've got to be feedin' chickens agin, an' ketchin' Gusty, an' it's drefful bad work for me to ketch him; he runs an' runs so, an' won't be coaxed 'cept Tomlin coaxes him."

Regrets were general. I was quite depressed by the loss to the family circle. Mr. Shaker, after expatiating on his regret, as, according to his statement, Tomlin had been more than a son to him, took his way to his room.

Tomlin was sadly missed. Edith, in particular, grew very disconsolate; but her desolation was manifested by an increase of affectation, and an increase of sentimentalism.

The engagement was soon confided to me. Edith informed me that Tomlin had scarcely said a word of his circumstances or prospects, and did not expect to see her again before Christmas.

His first letter arrived in the course of a week, and

as it contained kind remembrances for all the family, Edith was well burdened with responses to go in her next epistle.

That evening, when the letter was answered, and all these messages had received attention, Edith demanded whether I had anything to say in reply to mine. I answered rashly:

“Ask Mr. Tomlin, in my name, where he became acquainted with Alice Ludlow.”

Edith was curious, but I adhered strictly to the terms of the message, without vouchsafing any explanation.

I repented this message. A presentiment seemed connected with it, and I actually asked Edith to copy her letter again, and omit it. She was just coming in from a morning walk.

“You make no allowance for the punctuality of people in love,” she said, laughing. “My letter is just posted, and off the first mail.”

I looked for the answer with anxiety, certainly equal to her own, but days passed, and the answer came not.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON the great hall clock of the second story, the hour of midnight had sounded. I had gone to rest in an uneasy frame of mind, and it seemed for some time impossible to get asleep. With the dying sound of the clock's vibration, I sank into slumber, and in the semi-conscious state between waking and sleeping, my brain was visited by visions that partook the reality of life, and the vagueness of a dream. It seemed that a low moan sounded over the distant plain on which the moon's half-circle shone; the moon grew more distinct

and nearer, till it rose into the distinct and plaintive lowing of a cow. The confusion grew more bewildering and intense, till the prevailing feature of the scene was cattle everywhere. I was in a dark, moonless forest, the ominous head and horns of a bull shadowed forth under every tree, with faces, white and black, red and speckled, and their deep voices, alternating with a bellow and a whine, sounding painfully distinct in my ear.

I was startled by a shake of the shoulder. Mrs. Judson was at my bedside, and while I rubbed my eyes with confusion, the same noises as those of a herd, continued to assail my faculties, through the open windows. I was fairly awake. "What is the matter," I exclaimed, trusting that the sound of my own voice might decide whether I was the sport of an illusion.

"Lord knows," replied Judson, sententiously. "Road's full o' cattle—men a prowlin' round the yard. I didn't dare to light a candle. What shall we do?"

"Rouse Singular," I said, "and I'll speak to Mr. Shaker."

Hurrying on a part of my clothes, I went into Mr. Shaker's door, and rousing him to consciousness, made known the state of the case.

"Call Tomlin," was his first exclamation. "You can't, though, he's gone, poor fellow; now we are indeed deserted!"

I hurried next to inspect the state of affairs outside from the windows of Tomlin's vacated apartment. Mrs. Judson's appeal to Twist was quite audible from the attic.

"Sing'lar, Sing'lar, what on *airth*—ain't you ever goin' to get up? I tell you there's men a-pryin' round the stables, an' cattle all over the neighborhood."

"I can't help it," cried Singular. "How you do talk. I sent Sally to lock up the stables; they can't get in if they try."

The figures of three men were now dimly seen approaching from the stables. They drew up under the window whereat I was stationed.

"I say, hallo there!"

"What's wantin'," demanded Mrs. Judson, who, giving up Singular in despair, came as an auxiliary.

"Is Tomlin here—J. Tomlin, Esq?" demanded the stranger.

"I'm sorry to say he esn't. Want to see him?"

Some parley ensued among the party. A second question followed.

"When did he go?"

"This mornin'. I forget when, exactly," returned Judson, adding, in an aside to me, "Southern gawrillers, I reckon."

The three men again held a conference. A call from the fence attracted their attention. "Simpson, are you going to be all night?"

"Turn 'em in," emanated from this respectable body below the window. I heard the swing of the great gates, the dim white horns glancing past the fences, and the tramp of hoofs with the dismal bellowing, joined to the curses of the drivers, came up from the inclosure, where the forms of the red brutes and their muzzles on the fence were scarcely outlined in the dim light of the crescent moon.

"Well, this is gloris bizness," said Mrs. Judson, who, with her arms resting on the window sill, had contemplated these movements. "War is on the kentry powerful; I wish I was back to the Noth."

"Good heavens!" Mr. Shaker almost shrieked. "Are these men crazy with audacity, to turn a herd of cattle on my premises in this way? Go to them, Julia, and tell them who lives here."

"I 'spect they know that well enough; been askin' for

Tomlin. Lucky he ain't here, I guess they meant to take him off."

"And the stable door open!" exclaimed Mr. Shaker; "and the barn—who gave them the key?"

"Never asked for none; worried 'em open theirselves; they's a kind that doesn't stop for keys. Seem to be runnin' into the granary an' cow-houses."

"Thieves and plunderers, bloody rascals!" said Mr. Shaker. "I shall shut myself in the library and remain there. Satisfy their demands, Julia, and if they can be sent away peaceably, send them."

Determined to perish in the midst of his books, Mr. Shaker drew away in the silence of heroism. Another messenger came to the back door, where he rattled tumultuously.

"Say, why the devil don't you open your doors? Say, we're goin' up to the dram-shop, and meantime you must kill a dozen cocks an' make us a pot-pie. Stir yerselves now, and don't let us catch you with the stuff not done when we come back."

"Now I'm set to work," said Mrs. Judson, clambering up the staircase. "Whar's Sally? a sleepin' through all this row? Sing'lar, I s'pect, ain't got one stockin' on yet. Miss Renshawe, ef you'll call Sally to know what she did with the axe, I'll get the fire goin'. Then I must go through all those live horns arter the chickens. Lord help us, what is the kentry comin' to?"

I soon roused Sally, who scuttled directly into her clothes. The fire was kindled, the hens caught and dispatched, and stripped as fast as three pair of hands could bring it to pass. Our expedition, great as it was, we feared would not meet the emergency.

"You see it's impossible for me to make those chickens boil any faster than they can," said she. The hour passed, and as Mrs. Judson was lifting the heavy kettles

off the fire, a clatter at the porch announced the return of the cattle drovers.

"Miss Renshawe, you take Sally up to the libry, an' stay thar," said the housekeeper; "out o' the way o' them vagabonds. I'll take care on 'em down here. I called Miss Launey, but I reckon she's a-dressin' yet. I see she's commenced to haul out her brushes an' cums."

Miss Launey was with Mr. Shaker in the library. Both were highly apprehensive of the result of this nocturnal visit. The tumult in the kitchen was such as to reach our ears, distinctly inspiring emotions of a painful kind. Coarse shouts, boisterous songs, and rude hilarity, divided its character. And afterward the sound of some heavy object rolled on the floor, attracted our attention. Our suspense was relieved, or rather terminated, by Mrs. Judson.

"Act like so many devils incarnate," she said; "slammed all the pot-pie they couldn't eat, over the wall and winders, an' upset the soup on the carpet. They've gone down cellar now to see what thar is thar, and I s'pect they'll kerry all afore 'em, Sing'lar's gone to show 'em the way; they'll deal very massiful with *him*, I s'pose."

"I hope so," sighed Mr. Shaker, "but I trust he will not bring any of them to the library."

A call uttered by Singular, from the head of the stairway, summoned Mrs. Judson. "Hurry July," he said; "the captain is come, and you've got to get supper for him."

"A captain too, eh?" exclaimed Mr. Shaker; "this appears to be a serious matter."

"Seris enough ef he wants anything to eat," said Mrs. Judson; "but thar seems to be a lull out thar; I hope he's makin' 'em behave."

The lull did not last long, however. The clamor grew

excessive ; a voice made itself heard at last, in accents which sounded familiar to me ; a step sounded in the hall, the door of the library opened, and an officer in uniform crossed the threshold. Almost stunned by the recognition, I could scarcely repress the name at my lips "Captain Charles Berkley." It was the same slight and graceful figure, the same unmistakable lineaments, the cold blue eye, the soft and cruel lips, the thin spare features and closely cropped hair. Captain Berkley just touched his military cap in acknowledgment of the presence of ladies, then taking a little book from his belt, and a pencil from behind his ear, he addressed Mr. Shaker.

"What is your name, sir?"

It was given.

"And what place is this?"

The place was supplied. Captain Berkley noted both these items, remarking :

"We are under the necessity of taking away three cows and one horse found on your premises."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Shaker; "you may have the cows, sir, but it's the worst possible measure to take Gusty ; I really must object to that; he's spavined in the left hind leg, and can't live twenty miles of the journey."

"He does seem to be like an old rack of bones to be sure," replied Captain Berkley, still proceeding with his notes, "but I think I can overrule your objection. One of the baggage horses has just died, and your nag must replace him as long as he lasts. I've booked your cattle, and if you will give your estimate of their worth, I will charge it to the account of the Confederate States."

"When am I to be paid?" asked Mr. Shaker, anxiously.

"When the war is over, sir," returned Berkley ; "so put on your price."

"It will be all the same," I remarked ; " whether that is much or little."

Mr. Shaker looked at me bewildered.

"We are all good secessionists here sir, he said ; "every one of us devoted to the Confederacy, and it will owe us some gratitude as well as money. The cows are worth about forty dollars apiece, and I think Gusty, having been a very good horse in his day, should be valued at about a hundred and twenty-five.

"Pshaw!" ejaculated Captain Berkley ; whose pencil stopped while his blue eyes turned to Mr. Shaker's face. "That's too flagrant a shave. Very devoted you must be to the Confederacy, to put on such a price."

"*I am* devoted to the Confederacy," said Mr. Shaker, bringing down his cane with emphasis on the floor ; but I think a great deal of Gusty, and I know if he's driven before a baggage wagon he'll have to travel fast, and he's not used to that sir, for my man Twist is a moderate driver. Then, again, your soldiers will neglect to give him his oats, (your men are very careless,) and he won't be used to his stable, and he'll be very homesick. I would rather give you his price sir in gold on the spot, and though I won't say anything about the cows, I should think you had cattle enough in my yards to feed the whole Southern Confederacy."

"Gold on the spot, eh?" echoed Berkley ; "well, pay it over and you may keep your horse at your own price, a hundred and twenty-five dollars. I can buy as good a one for ten."

"How much?" cried Mr. Shaker, aghast. "My dear sir, I—I—I really—why I should think you might be content to let me keep him at half price. Gusty is quite an expensive horse. Sixty-two dollars I will pay you directly. Remember, we are good secessionists. There's our flag in the corner."

"I see," said Captain Berkley, going to the corner and unfurling the article in question. "Here's another flag behind the clock, that makes two." He unrolled as he spoke the banner of the United States.

"Yes, here it is," he proceeded, holding it up to the light; "here it is, thirteen stripes, no end of stars, eagles and all."

"Sir, sir," said Mr. Shaker, trembling with agitation, "the other is the Southern flag. That we only keep to hang out when the Union soldiers come, to prevent their carrying off our property."

"And the other," said Berkley, "you hang out when the rebels come to prevent them from executing like measures. What an old sinner you are!"

Mr. Shaker, rising with an air of desperation, went to his desk, through which he sought and drew out at last the paper which Tomlin had given me on the first day of my meeting with him, enjoining all Confederate soldiers to respect his property. Captain Berkley held the paper to the light, looked closely at the signature, and restored the document to Mr. Shaker, who stood in suspense.

"In this case," he observed, "I shall be reduced to make a bargain with you. Under our present necessities, Governor Chives could have no objection to our taking one animal out of the four."

"One of the cows," said Mr. Shaker, eagerly.

"No, I think we need the horse more; but if you will give us the three cows in exchange we'll take them. They are worth altogether about one hundred and twenty dollars, and the extra five I'll throw off in consideration of your extraordinary devotion to the Southern Confederacy."

"You are very reasonable, sir," said Mr. Shaker, recovering from the unfortunate episode of the flag, which he motioned Sally to spirit away from the disloyal

presence. "There is one thing, however, of which I feel it necessary to speak. My books, here, are quite valuable, as you may perceive. They comprise a library of three thousand volumes. They were carried off once by a party of Southern soldiers, and if you will speak to your men and repress their disposition to roam about the house, I shall be much indebted to you."

"Oh, they'll not meddle with your books, I'll promise," said the captain; "we are merely a foraging party in search of provisions. I will tell my men not to take anything from your cellar or outhouses."

"Thank you, sir—thank you, sir; greatly obliged to you," said Mr. Shaker, and as Mrs. Judson summoned the captain to supper he bowed and withdrew.

It was a period of cruel suspense. Captain Berkley's presence seemed to do little enough in awing the soldiers into silence. Boisterous laughter resounded from the sitting-room. Loud cheers proclaimed to whose honor their potations were dedicated.

"Here's to Captain Berkley. Hurrah!"

"Here's to Governor Chives!" More shouting. Next followed the name of "Jeff Davis;" finally, "Here's to Tomlin!"

This toast was drank several times in the course of the night, among many others that seemed to promise neither ale nor cider in Mr. Shaker's cellar by morning.

The clang of the gate at last heralded the departure of the unwelcome guests. As I looked from the library windows I saw the first breaking of dawn over the sky, illuminating in its misty light the tops of the neighboring hills, and the sombre waste of forest. The herd was winding its way through the gates, celebrating its reluctance to quit the late pastures with lowings and bellowings reverberating through the hills. The foraging wagons followed in the rear of the herd; and the whole train soon wound its way along the highroad.

I rushed down to the sitting-room where were the housekeeper and Mr. Shaker, exclaiming in tones of the utmost delight, "Thank Heaven, the cruel wretches have all gone!"

Mrs. Judson gave me a hasty nudge, and I perceived, to my horror, that *all* the recent guests had not departed. Captain Berkley was throwing back several letters into the mail-bag which Singular was holding open. Two epistles lay on the dresser. The mail-bag was closed, and Twist bidden to "get the horse."

"What is your name?" asked Berkley, turning to me.

"Louisa Renshawe."

"Call the other young lady," he added, to Mrs. Judson.

Edith answered the summons immediately. Captain Berkley presented her with an open letter, asking whether she knew the hand-writing. Edith assented. Berkley asked the name, and she replied, "Mr. Tomlin."

Captain Berkley walked to the window, and stood there long enough to study every line. We awaited the result in no little anxiety. The captain asked Mr. Shaker for the paper shown him in the library. Mr. Shaker produced it, and it underwent a second inspection. Berkley compared it closely with Tomlin's letter, and his brow grew dark. Mr. Shaker's name and place of residence were the only two words in Tomlin's hand.

"You might as well throw away that piece of paper," said the captain, returning it to the host; "It isn't worth a rush." He turned to Edith. "How long have you known this Mr. Tomlin?"

"About four weeks or five," she replied.

"You are engaged to him, I presume?"

Edith assented.

The captain handed her the letter without a word of apology for having inspected it then he took the other

from the table, and looked the contents through. This document I saw was in the hand of my sister Cassy.

"I would not advise you," he said, courteously, to me, as he gave me the letter with the air of a king who confers a title, "to leave Blue Hills to-day. There are foraging parties out, both north and south; but to-morrow it will be quite safe to travel."

"Hoss is ready," said Singular, obsequiously. Berkley bowed a general farewell, and walked out.

"Heavens! he is going to carry away Gusty!" exclaimed Mr. Shaker, in great trepidation, as he viewed from the window the movements of Captain Berkley, who was unstrapping the saddle from the back of a coal black steed, presenting the greatest imaginable contrast to the quadruped alluded to.

"Don't be scart," said the housekeeper. "Sing'lar was a-tryin' to be quick, an' so put on the saddle hind-side afore. Don't you see the captain's flopped it round. Thank Heving, he's orf. Never was so glad to see a man go in all my born days! Laws, Mr. Shaker, he wouldn't take Gusty. Why, he said the hoss looked wuss by daylight than he did in the dark."

Edith and I walked off together to peruse the letters in the retirement of the summer house. Mine was dated two days previous, and ran as follows:

"DEAR LOUISE ·

"I write in great haste to tell you that I have had a letter from mamma, and she entirely approves the engagement. She formerly knew the Herveys well; so it is all public now. Hervey has been here every day, and everybody wondered that I had no such announcement to make before. Galusha had also given his cordial approval. I must see you at once. Remember I have had nobody to talk to in so long. We all think you have staid long enough in Blue Hills, so lose no time in coming to Washington. Give my best love to dear Mr. Sha-

ker, and say I am sorry to lose my visit to him, but it seems impossible to come just now, and don't fail to come here *immediately*.

Your affectionate sister,

CASSY RENSHAWE.

P. S. Galusha has a commission in the volunteer army.

Edith called my attention, as I finished the perusal of this note, to a message sent to me by Tomlin, in the following words: "Tell Miss Renshawe that I send by the same mail an answer to her inquiries, which will prove satisfactory." What had become of this letter, was an anxious question, and after some discussion we could only decide that it had been withheld by Captain Berkeley among several others, which I noticed he had retained.

Our communications were interrupted by the summons to breakfast, and we came in to join Mr. Shaker and Mrs. Judson at a repast of coffee and johnny-cake, to which we sat down with more gratitude in our hearts than was generally accorded to superior fare.

"The cap'n kep 'em out of the steddly," said Mrs. Judson, "but they've ben into every other hole in the house! Made me fairly sick this mornin'. One room was up side down, an' the next was down side up, an' the next up side down again, an' so on, all through. Sally an' I's ben ever since sunrise a-clarin' up this sittin'-room. Sing'lar Twist he seen that captin' leap the fence, hoss an' all, an' he's stood struck to the spot ever since, I s'pect."

"Singular is faithful," sighed Mr. Shaker; "I heard the captain tryin' to persuade him to take Gusty and join his cavalry."

"Wus pokin' fun at him then," said Mrs. Judson, "I heard him, too. Said the hoss could move as fast as Sing'lar could."

"Clock's a-standin' on its head," said Sally, who was engaged in her duties as attendant. "Wonder what Tomlin would say if he saw that!"

The mention of Tomlin brought a certain gravity to every face. As soon as Sally had been dismissed to Singular's company in the kitchen, the subject was opened. It was certainly a most shocking fact that his health had been drunk the night before by a set of rebels. Edith resigned herself to the contemplation of the evidence with more calmness than I had anticipated. It was all weighed from beginning to end, and the conclusions arrived at were quite natural. His nocturnal visit to Mr. Shaker's premises—his possession of a paper signed by Killian G. Chives—his obstinate refusal to accompany me on the expedition to Caney Fork, after having set out for that purpose—his employing the two zouaves as spies, and Elisha's coming the night before his departure, were suspicious circumstances, which had all been outweighed in my mind by his frank avowal of his devotion to the Union cause. Even Mr. Shaker shook his head when these circumstances were reviewed. I alleged that I had once accused him of being a secessionist spy, and he had not denied it.

"He is a Southern man," Edith said, "that I cannot doubt. I was conversing with him here one morning, and I remarked on the sin of slavery; used some quite strong expressions, and he flushed up suddenly, and said to me, 'Miss Launey, you are talking to a member of a slaveholding family.'"

"Has he told you nothing of his family?" asked Mr. Shaker.

"Nothing, Uncle Shaker. He owns that something is left unexplained, but he is very sure that all will be satisfactory when it is made known."

"When do you write to him?"

"My first letter was sent to Baltimore; but he says in this one that I am to wait for his next letter to learn his address at present."

One thing puzzles me," said Mr. Shaker. "If he is a secessionist, why should Captain Berkley say nothing in his favor? I thought, this morning, he seemed inclined to sneer when his name was mentioned."

"He does not seem to like the Berkleys," said Edith ; "seems very reticent on the subject."

"Then," said I, struck by a sudden thought, "they know something to his disadvantage. His refusal to go to Caney Fork, came immediately after I informed him that Captain Berkley and Colonel Hunter were at Rocky Cross. He feared to fall into their hands."

"That's it, child ; you have it now," said Mr. Shaker ; "and he would not see Captain Berkley here ; he had received some intimation of his coming, and avoided him."

"Then he may not be a rebel, arter all," said Mrs. Judson.

A vague recollection came into my mind. It flashed upon me now vividly. I remembered his name when I first had heard it in the mouth of a conspirator, one night of that same year, at the Black Robin Club.

"Mrs. Judson," said I, sadly, "I am sorry to say on my knowledge that he is a rebel and a spy."

Slow as we had been to believe aught against Tomlin, we were forced to admit that, in professing to be a Union soldier, he had lived for six weeks in Mr. Shaker's family, under false pretences. Edith declared her intention of telling him she could not write again until the mystery that attached to him was cleared up.

"It's a very strange thing," said Mr. Shaker, as he rose from the table, "and I can't understand it—how a man of such a mathematical turn of mind, who solves problems that have puzzled a college professor, and understood navigation and surveying so thoroughly, should be nothing but a spy."

Mr. Shaker and his niece left for the study, where they

consulted for some time in private. Mrs. Judson sat moodily over the salver, contemplating the figures on the silver teapot, in a fit of unusual abstraction. At last she looked up and caught my eye ; her features changed.

"They may all say what they like," said she, bringing down her closed fist with emphasis on the table, "but I ain't a-goin' to believe anything agin' Tomlin ; I don't car' whether it's in black or white. I s'pose he's a rebel 'cause you say so ; but what ef he is? Ef he is I shall never say nawthin' agin rebels any more."

"Mrs. Judson !"

"Yes, Miss Renshawe, thar's some folks up Nawth that'll come up at the Judgment day, expectin' to see every man that's fit in the Southern army sent off down below, without grace ; an' it's my solemn belief they'll get disappointed. But as for Tomlen, rebel or no rebel,"—the housekeeper rose, and her face lit up with a sudden excitement—"I'll say this : I had a son, an' he died among strangers ; an' that night that Tomlen looked up at me with his wild eyes, an' said 'mother.' I tell you I thort of my own poor boy, and my heart warmed to him then, and it's never got cold, nor never will ; and you may, all of you—Miss Launey, that's his promised wife, and you that took his hand as his friend, and saved his life, which you sartin did—you may all say what you like about him now that he's gone away ; but I'll jest lay down this right arm of mine, an' hev it cut orf, afore I'll turn agin' him!"

The housekeeper dashed aside a tear, and called in Sally to take away the breakfast. There was no use in arguing against such a prejudice, and I did not attempt it.

That afternoon I announced my intention of departing

to the family. It was received with regret that was of a very flattering nature, although every one comprehended my anxiety to see my sister. I promised to return when I could, and expressed my hope that before the end of the summer I might be enabled to make a flying visit to Blue Hills, with my mother and sisters.

Edith was so sure of being utterly desolate after my departure, that she determined to accompany me as far as Baltimore, where she had an aunt who would be very glad to have her society for a few days.

Early the next morning, Mrs. Judson spurred up Singular to harness Gusty to the box wagon, which was to carry the trunks, and a horse from Garniss's was attached to the "shay," which Mrs. Judson ventured to drive. I took my leave of Mr. Shaker at the house, and by dint of constant shoutings at Singular to move ahead faster, the housekeeper brought the caravan to Rocky Cross in time for the nine o'clock train.

I looked for some time from the car window. Mrs. Judson's waving handkerchief, and Singular's straw hat, were soon invisible; and after appearing at intervals for some time, the Blue Hills at last faded out of sight.

It was a long ride to Baltimore; and when arrived in that city, I was glad to stop with Edith at the house of her aunt, who was not at home, to take some refreshment before proceeding to Washington. Miss Launey accompanied me to the depot, and in parting it was quite impossible for us to restrain a few tears.

It was well toward evening, long as were the days, before I came into Washington. It was a strange city to me, and I looked about in a haze of bewilderment, gazing out at the throng on the sidewalk, wondering where I should go in the rain, for it was falling fast, and forgetting Blue Hills in the prospect before me.

"Car ain't a goin' any farther to-night, ma'am," said a brakeman at the door.

Thus called to myself, I hurried to get off, felt for my checks and pocket-book, experiencing, for the first time, the inconveniences of traveling without an escort. As I stepped off the car, a lady with a wet cloak and dripping umbrella approached me on the platform. Her hood was thrown back, and Cassy's face revealed.

"Oh, you wretched girl! I've been down to the depot every day for a week! What has been the matter?"

I looked around me wonderingly. A dim white object was just discernible through the heavy clouds. I saw it half hidden by the smoke, and the sight woke new sensations.

"Is that the dome of the Capitol, Cassy?"

"Which? Oh, yes; that's the dome. Dear me, you can't see it here, and no time to look at it if you could. Hurry around with me to Aunt Bess. Never mind about the trunks, particularly; we're going right away again, the day after to-morrow."

RENSHAWE.

II.

WHITE CHIMNEYS.

"Every man is as God made him, and oftentimes a great deal worse."

DON QUIXOTE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GEASSANDRA had a hundred things to tell me, for which she found our walk quite too short, chiefly about Captain Hervey, about all the members of his very delightful family, mixed up with frequent ejaculatory commendations of that gentleman's extraordinary goodness and abilities.

I wanted to see Captain Hervey for reasons quite unknown to my sister ; the circumstances under which our short acquaintance had terminated, were uppermost in my mind ; but he could not be seen that night. The regiment was to leave Washington in the morning.

"Then you'll not see him again at all," said I.

"Oh, yes! he promised to come early to-morrow."

"But he may be detained."

"Not in the morning. He promised to come.

I now inquired for what place we were to leave Washington. Cassy said she had accepted an invitation from Mrs. Hervey, for me and herself, to visit her at her residence in White Chimneys.

"What! while you are engaged to Captain Hervey?" I exclaimed in astonishment.

"I don't want to go at all, Louisa. Indeed, you must understand exactly how I feel; but the Herveys have not the dimmest idea why it should be contrary to my feelings. I can't tell you till you see them what sort of people they are."

"They have called on you," I suggested.

"Dear me, no—nothing of the sort. It's been very informal, I assure you. The two daughters ran round in a great hurry one day, in morning dresses, no gloves or cards, French hoods on their heads; and when I came in embraced me in the most tumultuous way—said "Mamma" wasn't well and wanted me to come to the hotel to see her. I went there directly; and there sat mamma, all dressed up, with a great crowd of ladies in her parlor—just like a levee; and she seated me right down beside her, and introduced me to everybody that spoke to her as her 'new daughter.' It never seemed to enter their head that I need be at all embarrassed; and then, when Hervey came in, his mother asked us, before ten or a dozen people, to decide when we would be married. But they are all very kind people indeed—perfect jewels of goodness, and the first day I dined there, they made me promise to go down to White Chimneys; all crowded about, offered to come that night and help me pack. Dear Louise, I couldn't say no! It was all I could do to put them off till you came. Why, my dear sister, it really required all my skill to avoid staying all the time with them this past week."

"How many does this interesting family comprise?"

“Two sons, and two daughters; Mrs. Trueman, and Georgy.”

“Georgy? Is that for Georgiana, Georgina, or Georgina?”

“I don’t know. I never heard her called anything but Georgy. Sophia is a sister of Mr. Hervey’s, about the age of his youngest son. She’s rather different from the rest; has been educated at the North.”

“How are they on the political question?”

“All sound, with one exception. Major Hervey is in the Southern army. He is the eldest son.”

“You have not seen him, then?”

“Oh, yes; but it was early in the spring, when we first came to Washington. I like him very much indeed. He is married.”

“And his wife—do you like her?”

“Oh, I’ve never seen her. She does not visit the family. I believe it was a sort of *mésalliance*, and they are only lately reconciled to him.”

“I am surprised,” said I, “that he should have consented to a recognition that did not include his wife.”

“I can’t explain it,” said my sister; “I only know that he seemed to consider it a matter of small importance whether his wife was received or not. But let us hear about your own affairs, and what you have been doing.”

I was really glad to change the conversation, for though I entered strongly into Cassy’s feelings I was still anxious to hear Aunt Bess’s judgment on the Herveys before making up my mind unconditionally. Aunt Bess had just moved into a new house, recently furnished, of which the rooms were nearly all let to lodgers; but it was her intention to open it as a boarding-house in the fall. My aunt wore the air of a person not only out of health, but out of spirit. Of course, as soon as I saw her alone, I mentioned the Herveys.

Aunt Bess at once assured me that she heartily approved of Cassy's engagement. The Herveys were a highly respectable family, very well connected, and very wealthy.

As the item of wealth was one on which Aunt Bess invariably dwelt in her estimate of the advantages of an engagement, I was satisfied of that worldly good as as soon as her first words of praise were uttered. I inquired further into the family character.

"Very amiable, pleasant people. You always hear them well spoken of when they are spoken of at all. Hervey himself is a singular kind of person; the greatest contrast to Cassy, in looks, that you can possibly imagine."

"I have seen him," said I, "but long before this, of course. Looks are of no consequence, Aunt Bess, if the heart is right."

I expected some condemnation for uttering platitudes, but my remonstrance had been too feelingly made.

"Heart? Oh, my dear, his is lost, and Cassy's, too. You never saw two such crazy fools in your life."

"They are very much attached, then?"

"You'll see," and Aunt Bess would say no more.

Mrs. Trueman, one of Cassy's proposed sisters-in-law, was expected to tea, and she came quite punctually. She looked very much as she had on the occasion of our first introduction at the Ostranders', renewed our acquaintance in the most charming manner, talked of "*our* sister Cassy," and greeted that young lady in even warmer style. She had nothing to say that was very new or very striking; but what she did say could not have been spoken more pleasantly, and her face wore a steady, habitual smile, that seemed natural, after a while, though at first I pronounced it an inexpressive simper. Tea was served in the front room on the second floor, with the blinds closely drawn, and as soon as Mrs. Trueman and I had finished

making much of each other, at least as soon as there was a lull in our mutual congratulations and good wishes, which was by the time the first cup had been sipped all around, I asked Aunt Bess where Alice was at present.

"She has been away for a week now," said my aunt. "Oh, Louise! don't talk to me of Alice! I am discouraged, disheartened. She will go traveling all about with that old rascal."

Mrs. Trueman inquired what rascal.

"That old one-eyed rascal, Chives!" exclaimed my aunt.

I looked up in no little surprise that the speaker should have forgotten herself so far as to use such an epithet, but I saw only wrath and intense feeling in her features.

"Why, you are quite exasperated about him, Aunt Bess," said Cassy, laughing. "I think him very charming."

"Charming!" cried Aunt Bess.

"Yes. I don't think him a rascal at all; and I'm sure his one eye is handsomer than any two I ever saw in my life—apart from those whom I personally love."

The door opened at this juncture, and Alice walked into the room in her traveling dress. She went directly up to my sister.

"Shake hands with me, Cassy. I am your sworn friend from this moment forward. I like you far better for defending Governor Chives than for speaking well of me."

Aunt Bess received her daughter's kiss with a vexed, impatient air. Place was made for Alice at the table, and before taking her seat, she whispered in my ear, "not one word of Blue Hills."

The conversation, after this new accession to the party, ran on the same subject. Aunt Bess enlarged on the annoyance her daughter had caused her. "I'll lay the case before anybody in the world, my child. Is it right for

you to leave your own mother and run about from town to town with that scoundrel?"

"Why, mother, you know I'm obliged to leave you; that I've explained many a time; and I don't travel with Mr. Chives very often—never alone with him more than once or twice, to which nobody of sense could make the least objection."

"If you *must* travel, though, I don't see what necessity compels you to make yourself a wandering Jew; why don't you go alone altogether?"

"Why not go with Mr. Chives?" Alice demanded.

"Because it's not considered the thing, my child, and you know that as well as I do."

"How old a gentleman is this Mr. Chives?" inquired Mrs. Trueman.

"Eighty-seven last Christmas," said Alice

Mrs. Trueman laughed. "People probably suppose Alice to be traveling with her grandfather."

"Of course they do," said Alice; "and I don't travel with him, I say. I go where he sends me."

The subject was changed as soon as possible by me. Many were discussed which possessed no little interest for me. Galusha's entering the army was spoken of, and his present absence from Washington regretted. The Ostranders were alluded to next, and I was informed, as a startling piece of news, that Miss Douglas's engagement to Mr. George Berkley had been dissolved some time since.* Mr. Davis had gone South, to Louisiana, and when last heard of was drilling recruits for a Confederate regiment.

Mrs. Trueman had many little peculiarities of manner,

* Reference is here made to "Mary Brandegee," a previous work by this author, and also to a new work in press, entitled "Delaware."—ED.

to which I was all the evening in getting accustomed. She spoke of the various members of her family as though they had no proper names, mentioning them in the abstract as "brother," "sister," etc.; and in speaking of Mr. Trueman, she said invariably, "husband," without the possessive pronoun natural to prefix. Her carriage came quite late, and she promised to call for Cassy and me early on the morning of the second day, to set out for Mr. Hervey's country seat, at White Chimneys, whither all the family had gone.

When Mrs. Trueman had gone, Aunt Bess renewed her attack on Mr. Chives. Alice lounged on the sofa, pushing her slipper off and on, occasionally raising her eyes to her mother's face, with an air half amusement, half obstinacy. When Aunt Bess had ceased, more from weariness than exhaustion of the subject, I brought back the conversation to the Herveys.

"Where is Mr. Trueman?" I asked.

"Oh, 'husband' is in the rebel army," said Alice, laughing; "I think Mrs. Trueman is half secesh herself; sweet woman! I generally dislike sweet women, because they are almost always soft—soft in the sense of silly, you know. But Mrs. Trueman is sweet without being exactly silly, though she does act as though she was ready to embrace the whole world. The first time I ever met the Herveys, it did sound so very singular to hear Mrs. Hervey saying, 'my lamb,' to the major, and 'my darling' to the captain, and 'my sweet baby' to Georgiana; and those full grown men talking to 'papa' and 'mamma,' and to hear Mrs. Trueman shouting to her husband way across the street, 'My love! my love! your overcoat!' and then she ran out bareheaded, and in slippared feet, to carry his coat half way to the corner. Oh, Louise, it's a rich set you're going among to-morrow." And Alice stifled a laugh in the cushions of the sofa.

"Well," said Cassy, after sober reflection, "if the whole family do seem absurd in their manners toward each other, I must say that it is a hundred times better to err on that extreme than on the other. They had better, as they cannot strike the medium, be constantly worrying about one another, and talking affectionately to each other, than to be fault-finding and scolding all the time."

"You are right, Cassandra," said Aunt Bess, "perfectly right ; and I don't know that the Herveys are so very absurd after all. If they feel like loving and blessing each other, the fact that they indulge the feeling only shows their independence. They have not lived so long in the world without learning its ways so far as to know that coldness and reticence is more the fashion than warmth and unreserve."

This reflection, plainly pointed at Alice, was studiously unheeded by that fair damsel.

"I have heard it said," I remarked, "that when people make such a public display of affection, they generally live like cat and dog in private. Perhaps at the Herveys it is not quite so lovely behind the scenes."

"Oh, yes," said Alice, quickly ; "I must do them that justice. People who have staid months in the family, say they are the same abroad or at home. Sophia, to be sure, differs from the rest ; she is the same at all times, too—brusque and disagreeable."

That night Alice and I slept in the room adjoining that occupied by my aunt and sister, an arrangement brought about by my cousin, who was sure the day was long enough for Cassy and me to discuss our new connections, privately intimating to me that her mother would talk her quite dead about Chives. As Aunt Bess had left open the folding doors, however, I was several times awakened by the broad flare of a match, and the snap of a watchcase.

"What is the matter, Cassy?" I inquired at last.

"Four hours till day," was the answer.

I woke at last; the clock struck three. My sister was up and nearly dressed.

"Cassy, are you crazy, or is the clock wrong?"

"My dear Louise, I would not have Hervey come and be kept waiting for the world."

"Is he in the habit of coming at three in the morning?"

"No; he won't be here till five, but I can't sleep any more."

"My dear Louise," said Aunt Bess, laughing, "this is the time he generally goes away. The day before yesterday, Cassy and he talked in the parlor from morning till night with nothing to eat or drink."

Cassy watched at the window for two hours, and suddenly flew down the staircase to open the front door.

I feared that Hervey would leave before I had an opportunity of seeing him, but Aunt Bess reassured me on that head, and I did not come down till just at breakfast time. Hervey greeted me as though he were already my brother, and I saw by his eyes that he wished for an interview as well as myself.

"I must see Louise alone, a minute," he said to Cassy, and we walked away from the breakfast-room door to the balcony windows. The final fate of the Black Robin was discussed. Hervey assured me that the society had been torn up, root and branch, but, as might have been expected, not one of the conspirators met with his deserts.

"Don't you think you and I ran a great risk?" I inquired.

"Every one that meddles with *any* secret society runs a risk," said Hervey. "It is an ordinary rule, I understand, that a man who joins one, places his life at its supreme

disposal. Of course those men are prepared to deal summarily with their enemies."

"One word in conclusion," I said, as we returned through the parlor. "Who and what is Tomlin?"

Hervey paused directly. "What Tomlin?"

I related shortly the circumstances of my meeting with him at Blue Hills, and the general suspicion that he was a secessionist spy.

"You are mistaken," said Hervey; "all I can tell you now is, that he has been of signal service to the Government, and has saved fifteen thousand stand of arms from the enemy."

"Lately?"

"Yes; within a few days. He receives a commission very soon."

Hervey left that morning, and Cassy supported his departure better than I had expected. Aunt Bess and Alice had quarreled nearly all day on the usual subject, and when my sister and I withdrew after supper to our preparations for the morrow's journey, we left our fair relatives still at sword's point.

My sister talked over our plans and intentions with vivacity, dwelt much on Captain Hervey's merits, and quite as feelingly on her anxiety about our mother and Helen.

"My dear Louise, I am so sorry you are not so happy as I! I really don't express half what I feel for your sake."

"You need have no such delicacy, I assure you. I don't envy your being in love, after what I have seen to-day. If it involves getting up in the middle of the night, watching at windows, fasting all day, and such revery and absence of mind as you have evinced since morning, I would rather be excused."

"Then you are quite happy as you are?"

"Yes; only that we have no news of mother and Helen."

Cassy moved about thoughtfully. As she closed the lid of the last trunk, a new idea struck her.

"By the way, Louise, who was it you were in love with at the Ostrandens?"

Oh," said I, laughing, "that is all over now."

"What! Richard is himself again?"

"Certainly."

"So soon! I could never forget Captain Hervey while I live. If it's all over, you don't mind telling me who it was?"

"Not at all; don't mind telling any one. George Berkley."

My sister wasted much astonishment on this revelation. I was soon asleep, but Cassy kept me uneasily dreaming till one o'clock, up to which time she perused Captain Hervey's letters, with the gas at full blaze

CHAPTER XIX.

ON a quiet morning in July, I sat near the open gate of the lawn, before Mr. Hervey's house at White Chimneys.

I had gone thither to take a sketch of the place, but instead of that, had been listlessly dreaming the hour away. The whole village lay in full view, and the sundry sounds and sights in that quarter, denoted a life and stir that might have accompanied the growth of a more pretentious place. White Chimneys was too large to be called a village, and too small to be considered a city, although it has been dignified as such, by some historians of the recent war; and was at times so conspicuous

in its annals, that I have preferred to give it under a fictitious name in these pages.

The house was in appearance neither old nor new. It was a wooden building, two stories high, and broad on the front, with large windows opening to the floor. From the massive rough stone steps, in front of the piazza, whose slender pillars (for there was no balustrade) were overrun with vines, the beaten path led down the gradual slope to the gate. The lawn was deficient in the statues, fountains, mounds of flowers, and other devices, by which a vulgar taste seeks to enhance natural beauty by artificial attractions, but tall branching trees, oaks, and elms, and beeches, threw a cool and delightful shade over the grounds which were a welcome resort in the hottest days. There was something about the house, with its open hall doors, its wide windows, the ferns glancing back and forth, and the lively music, that forbade the idea of *ennui* or loneliness there.

And it was a happy household; not only the letter of affection's law, but the spirit, existed here. Every member of the family studied the wishes and regarded the convenience of the rest; and the natural result was, that the accidents which would happen, and the mistakes which were inevitable, dissolved on the face of the little community, like snowfalls in a river. I had remarked one day to my hostess, that I had heard it said, there was a skeleton in every closet; but I saw no trace of any skeleton here.

"Perhaps the closet door is shut," replied Mrs. Hervey, with a look that reminded me of the yet unseen eldest son, and the *mésalliance* to which Cassy had alluded.

I had learned soon to love the whole family, but the one who chiefly won my interest was Sophia. She had, unlike her two nieces, no pretension to beauty; had lived for some time at the North with her brother, and,

therefore, in looks and principles, we met on common ground. She possessed a variety of accomplishments, was a fine musician and linguist, very well read, and her proficiency in mathematics would have charmed Mr. Tomlin himself. In all branches of embroidery and needle-work she was well versed, as well as in the culinary art, where her skill was confessed to be superior; and a certain force of character made her the ruling spirit in the family; for to consult Sophia, was the reference in every difficulty, and till her opinion was secured, other verdicts were doubtful.

"You and I will have to agree," she said to me, the morning after my arrival, as I was watching her arrangement of some linen on the closet shelves in the hall.

"I trust so," said I, laughing.

"Oh, indeed we shall; I heard a great deal about you, long before I ever met you or your sister."

"From whom?" I inquired.

Chiefly from Miss Bourdlème. She's one of the universal persons, who know everybody, and everybody's relations."

Not liking to ask what Miss Bourdlème had said, I inquired how she liked that "universal" young lady.

"No objection to her," said Sophia; "except that she has what I call the Berkley fever, which, by the way, everybody takes when an opportunity offers."

"You know the Berkleys then?"

"Oh, dear, yes, for several years; not intimately to be sure. Mr. Dan Berkley, and my brother Lionel were quite warm friends; but since Dan's death, we have scarcely seen anything of them. The ladies of the family, we have seen very frequently. I have hardly made up my mind whether you have the Berkley fever or not, Louisa. Have you?"

"No," said I, smiling; and thinking it quite super-

fluous to add, that I had had it and recovered, I suppressed the fact, as one that could not raise me in Miss Hervey's estimation.

"By the way," she added, as she quitted the hall, "I beg you'll keep your trunks locked, for Lucy's a thief."

I found Sophia not always disposed to be talkative. She was capricious and fitful. At times she would sit for hours together at the window, steadily plying her needle; taciturn and grave, not a syllable escaping her lips.

On this morning I was, as previously related, just in the midst of a drawing of the house, but my mind was not sufficiently at ease to enable me to complete it. News had come of an alarming nature. White Chimneys was occupied by soldiers, who had come in that day, and the most unpleasing fact connected with the invasion was, that they were not Northern troops. Anxiety was rife throughout the family, and we were all in suspense until further intelligence should come from the village.

After many a vain attempt to fix my mind on my sketch, I tossed the paste-board into my portfolio, and moved up toward the house. As I neared the piazza, a footfall sounded behind me on the walk, a careless voice accosted me, and before I could fairly look round, some one stopped me and kissed me. I looked up in speechless astonishment, and beheld a tall young gentlemen in regimentals, whose face to my certain knowledge I had never seen before.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he exclaimed; "I took you for Miss Renshawe."

At this statement my astonishment increased. The stranger begged pardon again, and as I was still dumb, he passed on to the house. I followed. The military character of his dress had determined him as belonging to the new camp, and with Captain Berkley's foraging

party full in my memory, I was not particularly charmed with his unceremonious way of traversing the apartments below.

"Where are all the people?" he asked, returning from the deserted parlors to the hall.

I said I presumed they must be all in their rooms.

"Ah!" the specimen in uniform ran up the staircase, and went from door to door, exploring the second story like the first. I sent black Lucy in haste to the grove, to inform the ladies that there was a strange officer roaming over the house, for I could not admit the conviction that he had any right on the premises. He reappeared directly.

"There seems to be nobody in the house; where have they all gone?" he inquired. The sound of voices made me aware that they were coming at last. Georgy arrived first in the hall. My suspicions were ended.

"Oh Tiger's come—mamma! Tiger's come!" she shouted. "You dear old Tiger, how do you do?" and the ladies all flew in, and hung about the aforesaid Tiger, with an enthusiasm that left no doubt of his identity, and when I saw Cassy's share in the reception, I perceived for whom it was I had been mistaken. As soon as the first flush of greeting was over, Mrs. Trueman introduced "Cassy's sister" and "our brother Lionel."

Lionel and I had little time for exchange of compliments. He was dragged into the drawing-room, the negroes sent everywhere for Mr. Hervey, and the delight of the family exhibited in the most demonstrative way. Amid the numerous questions, which the new comer was obliged to ask and answer, it was some time before the discourse grew at all connected. I studied his features, with the interest I naturally felt in every member of a family into which my sister was so soon to be received; and for the hour that he remained, saw

nothing to dislike. Major Hervey stated that his regiment was at White Chimneys, for how long he could not say, and that Colonel Hunter's was quartered there also. Sophia, mentioned that she had heard a report that morning, that the —th regiment of North Carolina, commanded by Colonel Berkley, was in the vicinity.

"We expect Berkley in to-day," replied Major Hervey. Sophia expressed her sorrow that there was a rebel camp again at White Chimneys. She earnestly wished that the next time they went they might be scattered by the loyal troops of the North, and loaded with all the ignominy that rebels and traitors justly deserved.

"You seem utterly destitute of loyalty to your own soil, Sophia," said Major Hervey, who had listened to this unsparing denunciation with calmness that surprised me. "It is well that such sentiments here are rare."

"If I did not believe," said Sophia, with enthusiasm deepening in her gray eyes, "if I did not believe such sentiments exist among many of the Southern people, I should hope nothing for the country."

"Nonsense!" said Lionel Hervey with a laugh. "Such sentiments exist among the Southern people, in the same proportion that they exist at White Chimneys, one man to a hundred. Even this family, I believe, is lukewarm toward the old Union, and kindly toward the new Republic. I except you, Sophia, but no Southern woman talks as you do, unless, like you, she has been reared at a Boston academy.

"I am not a Southern woman," said Sophia, earnestly; "I am not a Northern woman; I am nothing which, in distinguishing me as a daughter of the Union, separates me from it. As for this family being friendly to the new Republic, as you call it, I little know them, if they do not share my sentiments. It is only folly and madness now to proclaim them, as we are already looked upon

with hostile eyes by the whole village. Nothing saves us from an open demonstration, but the fact that you are in the Southern army. Oh Lionel, what a blessed privilege you have thrown away; worse than thrown away—betrayed!”

“What blessed privilege is that?” inquired Major Hervey.

“Of defending your country,” cried Sophia. “As a woman, I can only give my heart, and hand, and faculties to the cause; but you could have offered your life! It can bring you no honor whatever, that you did peril it on the side of treason.”

“Well,” said Major Hervey, rising, “I suppose after all this patriotism, and detestation of rebels, my errand to-day is entirely useless.”

The nature of the errand was at once demanded. Major Hervey explained, that as the —th Carolina was expected that afternoon, he had supposed his sisters might like to witness the display; consequently he had come to offer his escort to the arsenal, from the windows of which they might view the procession. The invitation produced quite a revulsion. It was accepted by all but Sophia, who declared that she couldn’t endure the sight of rebels in a body, and should remain at home. Major Hervey did not attempt to oppose this determination, but withdrew, promising to return in time to ensure our being at the arsenal early.

When he had gone, Mrs. Hervey and Mrs. Trueman made an earnest appeal to Sophia to waive her scruples, and accompany them in the afternoon. They represented that the family was already regarded by watchful and malicious eyes, and that she, in particular, by reason of the active measures she had taken, had laid herself open to strictures from the disloyal citizens of White Chimneys, who were a large majority. Sophia at last, in con-

sideration of the possible effects of her non-appearance, and influenced solely, as she declared, by her wish not to bring any calamity on the family, repealed her decision.

That afternoon, while writing a note before Major Hervey's arrival, I happened to look up at Cassy, who was regarding me in an absent way.

"What are you thinking of?" I asked.

"I am thinking," said she, "that you never can have been in love with George Berkley at all. You looked so unconcerned when his name was mentioned. How was it possible, Louise?"

I had been indulging some self-congratulation on the same circumstance; I had borne the announcement of Berkley's speedy arrival without any emotion, nor was it granted even to the consciousness of my past folly.

"Really, my astonishment increases," said my sister. "You did not even blush when his name was mentioned. How do you feel on his being so near?"

"Entirely at ease. It was a very silly fancy, Cassy; do not remind me of it."

Reassured at finding that even she had detected no sign of the agitation which I supposed recollection had painted on my face, I was free now to wonder at myself that ever I should have been governed by so capricious a fancy.

CHAPTER XX.

IT'S not possible that *you* are going," said Major Hervey to Sophia, as, on the occasion of his second arrival, he found her waiting him with the rest, ready equipped for the excursion. We set out, taking the direct road to the town, which we found in a state betokening universal excitement. The streets were filled with

passing crowds; groups of soldiers and officers were chiefly distinguishable, members of the camp, already stationed at White Chimneys. Confederate flags floated in every quarter, and the arsenal windows were shielded from the hot blaze of the sun by the dark shadow of the palmetto tree, and the rattle-snake insignia, which the Confederacy at that time acknowledged as its emblems. The air of the whole place was expectation—it illumined the faces—it looked from the house-tops—it blocked up the way. Major Hervey, who walked beside Cassandra, at the head of our party, conducted us in safety to the arsenal, which was a collection of bare rooms, furnished in a rude and disorderly way, its recent service as a hospital commingling its characters so that it were difficult to decide what present use it had been put to. Following our conductor, we proceeded up a flight of well worn wooden steps, each one surmounted by a short brass plate, to the second story of the building. The apartment into which we were admitted was stocked with a medley of bedsteads, old muskets, and shelves filled with books and bottles. Major Hervey provided us with seats at the windows, commanding a full view of the street below and above, with the long line of bunting streaming in the sun.

I looked down on the throng of the populace, decked by the numerous secession badges, and overhung with the ominous palmetto flag and appropriate emblems from the serpent kingdom with wonder, at the unexpected vicissitude that had placed me thus in the very heart of rebellion.

In the countenance of Sophia Hervey, clothed as it was with an impressive solemnity befitting the occasion, I fancied I could trace a closer sympathy with my sentiments, than was felt by any of my other companions. There were other ladies in the room, all wearing seces-

sion colors, and some of their remarks reached the ears of our party.

"It is quite a large regiment," observed one of the ladies. "I am told there are fourteen hundred men, exclusive of the officers."

"And dear me! Almeria, you should see their colonel," was added in another voice. "He is perfectly splendid!"

"Colonel Berkley?"

"Yes. He's very young for an officer—only twenty-six—and oh, so admired, you can't conceive! Son of General Berkley, you know, of Mexican war recollection. I fell in love with him just seeing him once."

"Wonderful how far externals go with silly women," was Sophia's comment.

We waited a considerable time for the arrival of the expected troops, and it was later than the hour appointed, when the roll of a drum sounded in the distance, and the clear accent of the fife and bugle gave notice of the coming of the Confederate corps. There was a new rush to the windows on all sides; a new elevation of heads in the mass, and all faces turned to the South-western quarter. It was a steady, well mounted and gaily equipped procession of cavalry. The line was long; two large banners—one, the emblematic symbols of South Carolina in the van; the other, the great flag of the Confederacy at the centre—marked the line of the equestrian crowd, and the decorations of steel and scarlet on the accoutrements of the dragoons, flashed in the light of the declining sun. I gazed at the headmost horsemen as the troop came on, saw only a line of unfamiliar faces, and while I was looking for some that I might recognize, a halt was called, and the whole body stopped as the front rank came under the arsenal windows. I scrutinized every face, and my attention was for a moment caught by the figure of an officer on a black horse, on

the opposite side of the way. Just then I heard Mr. Hervey remark :

"How well Colonel Berkley looks !"

"Where?" said Sophia, turning back to the window from which she had withdrawn, as though the sight was too oppressive to be borne.

"Along the right flank," said Mr. Hervey; "black horse and blue saddle-cloth."

"That's not Colonel Berkley?" was simultaneously uttered by Mrs. Trueman and I, my attention thus directed to the officer who had attracted my momentary notice. Cassy said in a low tone to me—

"You don't even know him! how you *do* astonish me!"

The officer meanwhile gathered up the bridle and rode on a few paces; the flash of the sunlight came full on his features, and as his head was turned for a second, I was staggered by the resemblance.

"So it is," said Mrs. Trueman; "but really, I should not have recognized him. His hair is all cut off, and he is terribly browned by the sun."

I looked again and was convinced. It was certainly Berkley. The motionless grace of his position, the invincible ease of his air, were unmistakable; and when I saw him shaking hands warmly with Major Hervey, there was no farther room for delusion.

But a few minutes to gaze were granted the admiring crowd at the arsenal windows. The order to move on was shortly given, and the mounted concourse proceeded along the crowded street. It was of course a long time in passing, and when fairly gone, it was some time before the throng dispersed.

We waited for Major Hervey in the arsenal. The room was well filled, for as some pieces of artillery were coming in through the lower hall, all the ladies who had

visited that building were detained by their inability to walk over the cannons, and caissons which blocked the way. When a reasonable time had passed, and Major Hervey had not come, the ladies concluded to wait no longer. I was rejoiced to see some signs of escape, as the very atmosphere seemed infected by the spirit of secession with which I was oppressed. I followed the crowd down the stairs, passed under the palmetto flag and the rattle-snake, and emerged from the entanglement of the artillery, which was still encumbering the passage, and to which the beauty of many ladies' dresses was sacrificed.

There was a crowd just outside the door as we came out. The first person whom I recognized among it was Major Hervey. He apologized for being so late. Mrs. Trueman showed some disposition to linger.

"Lionel, I did not know but we might see something of Colonel Berkley."

"Berkley—oh, no," laughed Major Hervey. "He's too busy to be running about the town, I can tell you. I don't expect to get a minute's speech with him till to-morrow morning."

This statement was scarcely made, when suddenly hurrahs sounded from the lower street. A crowd was collected before one of the large buildings, and incessant waving of handkerchiefs was going on at the windows opposite. An officer appeared on the balcony and called out to the crowd that Colonel Berkley was not there; he was down at the camp; and a rout ensued in the direction of the camp. I had but just recovered from this evidence of popularity, when I discerned the object of the recent attempt at ovation, coming down the block, arm in arm with Colonel Hunter. Berkley stopped to speak to the ladies of the Hervey family, and Cassandra. I stood back with my veil drawn close, and passed unre-

cognized. Many gentlemen of the town, and officers from the camp already stationed at White Chimneys, came up with congratulations and commendations.

"Your regiment acts splendidly, Colonel," said one of these envoys, whose hero-worship was written on every lineament of his face.

"Acts well enough here," replied Berkley. "How it will act under fire, I cannot say."

"He's a capital officer," added the gentleman, in a subdued tone, to a friend as the two colonels went on. "They say his regiment was drilled under his own eye, and he knows every man in it by name."

Major Hervey accompanied us back through the heart of the town, which was still quite upset by the recent arrival. It was after sunset when we reached home, and as soon as we were within doors Cassy reported to me her conversation with Major Hervey. She had made him acquainted with her desire to return to Washington. Lionel had promised to see her across the lines on the following day, and Mr. Hervey, himself, was to accompany her.

Cassy owned her anxiety to get back. Her marriage was to take place before the close of the summer; and my sister found it necessary to be under Aunt Bess's roof immediately.

As I and Helen were to be bridesmaids, Cassy urged me to follow her to Washington by the close of July, that I might be prepared for the ceremony.

In the midst of all this discussion there was scarcely time to allude to the event of the past day. I granted a few minutes before midnight to some reflections at the window of our rooms looking towards the village. I judged, from the constant turmoil, that the new-arrived branch of the Confederate army was not yet settled in its quarters, and wondered whether there would be such a tumult in that direction every night.

"I can hardly recover from the fact that you have thrown off your attachment to Berkley so easily," said Cassy. "I always thought that if you were ever in love you would never conquer it in three months—you are such an enthusiast—such a whole-souled creature, Louise."

"You actually seem disappointed," said I, laughing, "that I have been so fortunate."

"I don't understand you. I don't really *know* you, Louise," Cassy continued, restlessly.

"You don't see why I was ever so silly?"

"No, I understand that. I was really captivated by him once, myself; but, of course, I love a being so superior to Berkley——"

"*Superior!*"

Cassy looked at me with exultation.

"You need not suppose," said I, "that, because I am not so silly as formerly, I am blind to the fact that Berkley *is* superior to the majority of mankind."

Cassy chimed in, "Oh, yes—superior—majority, certainly," and not another word could I extort from her that night.

CHAPTER XXI

TEN days or more had gone by. No member of the family had been in the village since its occupation by the Southern troops, and of the doings there we only learned by rumors. Discontented at last with the seclusion which, though self-imposed, was considered expedient in the unsettled state of the neighborhood, the young ladies came to the decision to vary its monotony by a day spent in the woods at Honey,

Island. The island was described as being a delightful, shaded spot, the favorite picnic ground at White Chimneys, within half a mile of the suburbs of the village, and yet too public a place to be at all dangerous. The Chardavoynes, a family of some importance in White Chimneys, were the original projectors of this move. The picnic was to be a thoroughly quiet affair. Nobody was expected to go but the Herveys and the Chardavoynes, though the ladies of the last mentioned family intimated that should an officer drop in, they would not resent the intrusion.

Not a few of the officers had been frequent visitors at the Herveys' domicile for the last week, and the Chardavoynes knew it, wherefore Sophia expressed confidentially to me her opinion that the Chardavoynes, who had never seemed to value their society particularly before, were merely desirous of their presence at the picnic as a magnet to allure the officers, and Sophia acknowledged that of all admirers of the gentlemen in black and gold the Misses Chardavoyne were the most enthusiastic.

The day before that set for our excursion to Honey Island, I came in from a morning walk, not prolonged very far from the house, found the ladies all on the piazza, and three officers added to the party. Major Hervey sat smoking on the steps. Colonel Hunter was busily engaged in mixing punch, with coat-sleeves rolled back, and a peculiarly happy expression of face. The third gentleman was one whose physiognomy had not gladdened my gaze for a much greater length of time. It was Judge Ostrander's nephew, and his novel attire, as well as the style of hairdressing adopted by the army, had created such an alteration that I hardly recognized him until Sophia mentioned "Captain Davis." Colonel Hunter was chattering so volubly that no side conversations were possible. He was dilating on the sensation produced in the village by the military camp.

"Town's fairly upset," said Hunter. "You haven't been down lately, and you can't know what's going on unless somebody tells you. By George, it makes me think of Miss Austin's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, where the heroine's sisters kept going to Meryton—regiment stationed at Meryton, you know—and the women at Longbourne village were all the time running there—some important business, of course. White Chimneys sees the same sort of thing. When we first came, we never saw a female in the streets, from sunrise till sunset. Began to think the place hadn't a woman in it. State of affairs lasted about three days; then they began to come out like Mayflowers, dozen or so at first—now the place blossoms with them. Of course, there's enough that show themselves once or so, and then go off to blush unseen; but a good many appear every day on the promenades."

"A great many live in the village," said Mrs. Trueman. "They cannot help that, you know."

"No, I know they can't; and they can't help running to the window, of course, when a good-looking officer steers in sight. By George, when we first came, an officer was an officer, old or young, handsome or plain; but they've grown discriminating now—reserve their best smiles for the best-looking men. Always talking about this one's eyes, and that one's style, and the other one's manners. As for Berkley, he fairly brings down the house. Beauregard's photographs couldn't go off faster——"

"What! Are Colonel Berkley's photographs for sale?" cried Mrs. Trueman.

"I don't know that they are. Don't get excited. You didn't let me finish. I say Beauregard's photographs couldn't go off any faster than Berkley's on the score of good looks, and I've known people look after Beauregard in the street—men and women, too—that's a fact.

Ever seen him? Man that owns the daguerrean gallery has been down every blessed day trying to get us to come up there and have our pictures taken, and we've been putting him off, and he still keeps coming. Suppose he thinks we'll go and sit just to get rid of him. Jackanapes! he knows he'll make money by it. He shan't make any off my physiognomy, I'll be sworn. Now the next thing that's come up among the ladies, shooting's the fashion. Heard a tremendous banging about the houses. Didn't know what was afoot. Soldiers forbidden to shoot, you know. Come to investigate, found it was the ladies—whole crowd of them—practising. Got me up there to show them how. Can't think of their names—know them well enough, too. Very clever girls, too, they are. Quite respectable. You know, Miss Hervey, those young ladies at the house just across the village—big house, overrun with grape vines, and all kinds of vines."

"Chardavoyne?"

"Oh, yes, the Chardavoynes—that is the name."

"So you know them?"

"Yes; Chardavoyne introduced me himself, and I've done nothing since but introduce the rest of the officers. It's a great set, those girls are. Not half so afraid of a musket as they are of a fly. I was up there last week to stay all night. Just went out on the piazza in the morning for a smoke. After I had drawn about a dozen puffs they all came out screeching and screaming, 'Oh Colonel Hunter, look at your coat!' There the smoke had brought down about three thousand of those green caterpillars. Don't see what business people have to grow such vines round their front doors where people are all the time smoking. I asked the young ladies to take off the caterpillars; but, oh, dear, mercy, they wouldn't touch one of them—trembled, and scattered, and left me alone there to my own resources, and so——" Colonel Hunter

began a snapping of finger and thumb about his shoulders and head to illustrate this point of the narrative.

"And are they learning to shoot?"

"Yes—I was going to tell you all about it. Down at Chardavoyne's, I say, this morning, the Chadseys and the Timberlake girls, and, in short, all that tribe, some ten or a dozen of them altogether; and I was trying to teach them to load their guns without filling them up to the muzzle, and they saw Berkley coming along the street, and by Jove they were so excited that they nearly got killed, every soul of them—shot two horses and a nigger's hat, and broke all the windows in the house, and one bullet went right through my hair. Never came so near getting killed in my life."

"Shoot Berkley?" inquired Captain Davis.

"Lord, no! They took devilish good care not to shoot *him*," rejoined the colonel. "They wern't half so careful about me. Married man of course—no consequence where I went to. Muzzles all pointed the other way when he came in, I can tell you. So afraid he wasn't coming in that they told me to ask him. Lord! how they did stare! Nobody spoke above her breath. As soon as he was gone their tongues were fairly unlocked. Talked about him all the while I was there. Hervey, don't you think it very bad taste for ladies to entertain a man by praising another one's fascinations up to the skies?"

"Certainly," said Major Hervey.

"Very bad taste," chimed in Captain Davis.

"Of course it is. Miss Chardavoyne was regularly enraged with me, the other day, because, when she had been executing an air on the piano, I began to tell her how well my wife played. She walked about, and fanned herself, and muttered, 'Of course, Mrs. Hunter is the finest performer in the world.' This morning I was

tempted to remind her of it, when she was enlarging on Berkley's perfections."

"Perhaps," said Major Hervey, "they expected you to tell him."

"To be sure they did. I knew that well enough. Oh, I told him of it. 'Berkley,' says I, 'they're all a pack of devilish fools.' So they are. Just mention his name, and you've touched them off. I don't say they're the only ones. Yesterday morning those Timberlake girls came down to the village, and walked up and down opposite the arsenal two or three hours, stopping first at one place and then at another, waiting all the time to see Berkley."

"To see him—what for?"

"Nothing. Just to see him come out. As soon as he had gone, they went about their business. I wasn't there. You saw them, Davis, didn't you?"

"No—Whipplestaff told me."

"Yes, I had it from Whipple, too. Reckon he perched himself up to watch their movements."

Sophia was not a little indignant. "What a high-souled occupation!" she exclaimed. "No doubt it was all accidental! Ladies must buy ribbons if officers are in the village. I don't suppose the Misses Timberlake thought of Colonel Berkley at all."

Hunter laughed. "I would not swear to that," said he. "Two of them were supping at Stilesen's the other night, when Berkley came in to speak to me; and by George, those girls put down their knives and forks, and stared at him, fairly lost in admiration—hadn't seen him before, either."

Major Hervey put in a forcible plea for the young ladies.

"The Timberlake girls are artists," said he; "Amateurs, of course, and the eldest one paints portraits beau-

tifully. I suppose they are professionally attracted by Berkley's face. It is natural enough for them to take observations regardless of appearances. I have seen them stare, as you call it, at a female face in the same way."

"Well, that's confirmation," said Hunter. "Two of them saw him, and stared; and as you say they are artists, and prone to stare, they brought the third one down to stare too. Whipple said she had her eyeglasses up as soon as they told her Berkley was coming. Needn't tell me they were down there just to buy ribbons. Berkley never saw *them*. Officers told him about it last night."

"How intensely flattered he must feel!" said Sophia, looking quite annoyed.

"Oh, no; he didn't believe it.. Said, as you did, that the ladies were probably buying clothes, regardless of the officers. That's what he *said*. Walby thinks Berkley knows it all as well as anybody. Walby's quite disgusted, though I'm sure he gets invitations and courting enough about the village to satisfy one man's vanity. Here's my punch—Miss Hervey try it. I'll give you the recipe for your picnic: One quarter lemonade, and two-thirds whiskey. Milk punch: sugar and milk one part, and whiskey four parts."

Sophia tasted the mixture and put down her glass. "Why not all whiskey, Colonel Hunter?"

"Why, if it were all whiskey it wouldn't be punch. Tell the officers you'll give them some of Hunter's punch, (that's the name of the beverage,) and they'll all be down at your picnic. By the way, Miss Cassy Renshawe has left you. I'm sorry—was in hopes of seeing her."

"Gone to Washington," said Sophia. "You know her I believe, Colonel Hunter."

"Yes—caught a glimpse of her the other day in the street. Didn't have a chance to speak to her. She's a very pretty girl. I said so to Berkley. Says I, 'Berkley,

‘that’s a very pretty girl that’s engaged to Laud Hervey;’ and says he, ‘Devilish pretty girl.’ So she is; and what’s more, she’s a fine, clever girl. I’m indebted to her, Lord knows I am. Why, if it hadn’t been for her I should never have seen my old uncle Jonas in his last moments; she came there and found him just dying, and his wife off at a party; and, George! she was off to my hotel, and had me and my wife on the spot. Capital girl, that Miss Cassy Renshawe. Sorry she’s gone. I was coming up to call on her just the very evening before she left White Chimneys; but Walby took me over the river to look at a spy, or what he took for a spy, and I couldn’t come.”

“A spy?” repeated Davis.

“Yes, you must know we got into a kind of a scrape up in Maryland, at a little one-horse town, called Rocky Cross, and it was all the fault of one woman they said. Some woman had been up at my camp that day after a trunk. All a trick, of course. Don’t remember anything about her, and Walby was so thundering polite to her—got out her trunk for her, and all. She sent up the trunk on purpose to get an excuse to come after it, and went off the same night to the Union men at Caney Fork, and had them all down on us bright and early. Walby thinks her name was Ryan—woman about forty years old, and squint-eyed. He hasn’t seen a woman since that he doesn’t take for the same person. Curious how he takes it to heart.”

The punch went round the circle just in time to bring Colonel Hunter another subject, and my mind soon grew relieved of some apprehensions to which his late remarks had given rise.

The picnic prospected was spoken of. Hunter and Davis promised to join the party at some time during the day, and Sophia extended the invitation no farther, quite certain that the Chardavoynes would repair the defi-

ciency. Major Hervey owned that he thought picnics were the greatest nonsense imaginable; but if so many fascinating ladies were coming so near to the camp as Honey Island, dismal as the place was, he could not resist the attraction.

"A dismal place!" cried Georgy. "Oh, Tiger, how can you say so! It's beautiful green woods, and candle-stick fixtures on the trees, and the river is lovely."

The incongruities of the picture did not disturb me. My only fear was that of meeting Captain Walby. Of course the last person I wished to see, some accident might bring; but as I had not the least recollection of his appearance, and was confident that he was quite as oblivious of my own, I determined that the sooner our encounter was over the better, and prepared my soul accordingly.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW WE GOT THERE.

SULTRY to the verge of oppressiveness was that day, perhaps the hottest known during the July of that memorable summer. If our party, on quitting the cool shade of Mr. Hervey's lawn, had known how hot it was, we should not have gone; in which case I should have lost the experience of the day, and posterity the account of what we took, what we wore, and what we went in.

1st. All wore straw hats, and white muslin dresses—Miss Renshawe with black bows attached. (Amiable critics will please to overlook the apparent egotism which omits all mention of the appendages of the other ladies.)

2d. We took black Lucy, also several baskets of pro-

visions, which, not to aggravate hungry readers, I forbear to detail.

3d. We went in a four-wheeled carriage with the side-curtains rolled up for the sake of ventilation, drawn by two horses of stalwart proportions, and engineered by black Peter, a young negro of Mr. Hervey's establishment, in love with black Lucy.

Sophia had given orders to the said Peter to drive through White Chimneys with speed, consequently, coming down the main street of the village we raised quite a dust. We found the Chardavoynes already gone when we reached their house, and drove on to Honey Island, arriving there about noon, and, much to our surprise, found no Chardavoynes at all.

"Gone to the village, no doubt, to look for officers," remarked Sophia. "It would be just like them."

Honey Island was in reality no island at all, being merely a peninsulic extravagance of the coast, rendering the river at that pass about half its usual width. The picnic ground was a margin of beautiful green woods on the western cliffs of the stream, intersected by occasional rocks, a place, on the whole, where the sun was not expected to shine, but where it did shine plentifully on every spot where we tried to set the dinner-table.

What could have detained the Chardavoynes was for some time an unsettled question, settled at last by the appearance of the young ladies *en masse*. Errands in the village had detained them, and one accession to their party had probably made these errands less burdensome. It was a very tall officer, in huge boots, and full dress uniform, with a very haughty and disagreeable face, introduced by Miss Chardavoyne to the company, as "Captain Horace Edward Livingstone Walby, of the staff of Colonel Hunter." Captain Walby, by five profound obeissances, acknowledged the quintuple introduction, and seated

himself on a pile of rocks, amid a group of admiring Chardavoynes. The rest of the company were too busy to think much about him. Several calamities had been discovered. First of all, the refreshments deposited in a shady place had been attacked by the sun; and the state of the butter was only matched by that of the ices. All the forks and spoons had been forgotten, except three, and Peter had neglected to bring oats for the horses. Peter was sent to the village to buy oats, and Lucy to the Chardavoynes for table furniture, and they marched off in company.

In the meantime I had been traversing the grounds, looking for a lost article, and as I examined every blade of grass, and every patch of sea-weed, where I had not been, as well as where I had, I was between two and three hours in the search, and at last rejoined the party, thoroughly dispirited with my ill success. I found them all talking together under the trees, while the magnificent Captain Walby retained the same attitude which he had struck on first taking his seat. Sophia was tending the fire, kindled under the tea-kettle, on the rocks.

"How soon are you going to have dinner?" demanded Captain Walby, the first words I had heard him utter like a man fairly awake.

Sophia spread the cloth, and selected all the viands undamaged by the sun. The captain viewed the operation with an air of great disgust.

"Do you do this sort of thing yourselves? Where are your servants?"

"Oh, I'm not embarrassed by it," said Sophia, consolingly. "In my brother's family at the North, where I lived for several years, there was but one servant. I always superintended the cookery, and garnished the tables with my own hands."

"Positively shocking!" pronounced the captain.

On Lucy's arrival with the spoons, I was admonished, by loud calls from the trees, that dinner was ready. I left a second investigation of the bushes as unsuccessful as the first, and came dejectedly to the table.

"What have you been looking for?" asked Sophia.

"My pocket-book," I replied.

Miss Chardavoyne, either because my answer was unintelligible, or for the sake of being witty, said with a silly laugh to Captain Walby: "Did she say her heart?"

"No," said the captain, sublimely sarcastic; "something that lies very near it; eh, Miss a—a—um?"

"Yes," I acknowledged, "very near it."

The point of the witticism did not present itself till some further observations enlightened me. They were quite audible, though made in an undertone to Miss Chardavoyne. Refreshingly prominent were: "Long Island family, eh?" "Wealthy, eh?" "Mother a woman of property—ah!" "Renshawe! who are they? I never heard of them before."

As one Renshawe, at least, had never heard of the Walbys before, the misfortune he mentioned was not laid very keenly to heart. He next inquired how much money my pocket-book had contained.

After taxing my recollection, I replied, "between four and five dollars."

"My stars!" said the captain, looking around upon the ladies who were politely inquiring where I had last had the pocket-book. "Mystars! nobody need to be very uncomfortable about that. Why, Miss Renshawe, do you consider that so very much money?"

"It might be a great deal to some people," said I, not feeling called upon to give a direct answer. "I may have seen the time when I thought it a great deal, and may see it again, but apart from its contents, the pocket-book was invaluable to me."

"A pocket-book, invaluable!" sneered the honorable captain. Lower tone—"that's genteel."

Sophia took up my defence.

"I cannot see, Captain Walby," said she, "why it should be ungenteel to regret the loss of a pocket-book."

Mr. Walby bowed profoundly; but the bow was one of deference, not of conviction. For some reason he seemed to take an interest in my edification, for all dinner-time he kept up an incessant discourse, interspersed with severe and significant glances at me, mainly directed against parvenues—love of money—vulgar people grown rich—common circumstance at the North—fashion among them to put money before birth and education; but with all their wealth, they were thoroughly despised and studiously avoided by the first families.

I felt these remarks very unpleasantly; but there was no escape until dinner was over, when I resumed my search. Captain Walby followed at a sauntering pace, and while I looked disconsolately at the bushes, wasted another sentiment on my unappreciative ears:

"I can inform you, that there are circles where you would suffer positive exclusion, if you were even to intimate you thought a pocket-book of value."

I made no reply, and whatever information the captain might farther have vouchsafed at that juncture, remains undecided, as approaching uniforms were just then discernible through the trees. On seeing more officers, the Chardavoynes were thrown into quite a flutter. Colonel Hunter was accompanied by a gentleman about his own height, with staring black eyes, and hair still blacker, quite short, and disposed to stand on end all over his head.

"Ladies," quoth the colonel, "we've come down to take tea with you. Oh! here's Miss Renshawe! My dear young lady, I must really beg the privilege of shaking hands

with you, I did not know who you were yesterday; didn't exactly hear your name; but you're Miss Cassy's sister, I discover. Miss Cassy and I are great friends, famous friends; and I'm only sorry its not a Southern man she's going to marry; but Laud Hervey's a fine fellow, a capital fellow; and he only needs to be in our army to be worthy of your sister. She's a noble girl, she's not afraid of the devil in horns and hoofs; she wasn't at all afraid of him in hoops and flounces, circumvented old Hinda, I assure you. You know old Hinda? By George! I never'll forget your sister; rushed right into my room ahead of the footman, eyes sparkling, beautiful as an angel.

"'Mr. Hunter,' she said, 'your uncle's dying—he wants you immediately—go like the wind.'

"So I went like the wind and I got there. Poor old man was just off the hulks.

"'Godolphin,' said he, 'I've married a demoness!'

"Told the truth on his death-bed, that I'll swear to! and I've seen your sister since, and though she's as fair as Aurora, she never looked as she did that night in my eyes, and never will, unless she opens my prison door."

Colonel Hunter delivered this speech with glowing face, shaking my hands continually throughout. The gentle man who had been left all this time in the background, ventured, by a gentle nudge, to remind the colonel of his presence.

"Oh! Whipple, I forgot you; there you are, to be sure. Ladies, allow me to present to your honorable company, my esteemed friend, Captain Whipple, of the staff of my remarkable colleague and brother-in-law, Colonel Berkley. What's all that you're saying, Whipple? eh, Whipplestaff? Oh! yes, ladies, this is Captain Whipplestaff, of the ——th regiment of North Carolinians. Just keep quiet a minute, Whipple; the ladies can wait for your conversation till I get through apologizing for

having brought you. Ladies, Captain Davis was very much detained this afternoon; couldn't get down, and thought Whipple would like to come, and not daring to appear all alone, I asked Whipple, and he's here. Hope you'll not send him away."

The ladies altogether exclaimed that Captain Whipplestaff was very welcome—very much delighted, and so on.

"Yes, you ought to be pleased," said Hunter. "Whipple's a good fellow," and he added aside to me: "affected as the deuce; chatters enough to deafen one; talks fashionable Dutch, stutters when he is angry; but they won't find it out. Ladies, I have been charged with a message from sundry of your sex and station at White Chimneys, who are coming this evening with augmented force."

"Ladies to join our party!" said Miss Chardavoyne, indignantly.

"Oh, not many! only the Misses Timberlake, and the Misses Chadsey, and the Misses Catherill, and the Misses Kenworthy, and the Misses"——

"Oh! spare the catalogue!" cried Miss Chardavoyne. "It is an unparelled piece of impudence. We will all go home at sunset, and you may come to supper at our house."

"Stay," said Hunter; "the officers are all coming along with them, and several gentlemen from the village, and a raft of niggers first, to get the place prepared for the invasion."

This information calmed the indignant lady, and her design of going home at sunset was abandoned. Just then the "niggers" came in sight, and Colonel Hunter's orders were given at once. Two bathing-houses on the sand were pulled down, and rude tables nailed up at intervals about the place, and the lamps attached to the trees were put in lighting order. The colonel ran about expeditiously after the niggers, the ladies followed the colonel, and Mr. Whipplestaff lagged around after the

ladies; while Mr. Walby sank back on the rock, looked at his watch, and eyed the performance with occasional remarks evincing his dissatisfaction.

By sunset, at which time the negroes were dispatched by the colonel to the camp and Stilesen's, charged with commissions, we sat down on the cliffs for the quiet hour which we were sure would ensue, for it was time for drill at the camp, and Hunter was sure no officers would show themselves till late in the evening.

"Is Colonel Berkley coming down to-night?" anxiously inquired the ladies.

"Ask Whipple."

Whipple, quite embarrassed at being listened to by so many ladies, cleared his throat, hemmed and hawed, and at last made known that he did not think his colonel could come.

The Chardavoynes scolded Colonel Hunter. Hunter pretended it was not his fault, and after considerable discussion seemed quite provoked.

"Ladies, he can't marry all of you," he said, "and what he's to do unless he turns Mormon, and you all emigrate to Utah"——

"Now Colonel Hunter, oh! oh! oh!" Protestations grew vehement. Strangest thing that ladies could never speak well of a gentleman, without being accused at once of designs on his heart. In this case it was peculiarly painful. So unkind in Colonel Hunter to think so; so inhuman in him to suppose so; so cruel in him to say so. Nobody there had the slightest intention of marrying Colonel Berkley. Nobody there had been asked. Nobody would think of it if she were asked.

"I'm really quite bewildered," Hunter began. If he was bewildered all the better. Now then, that was a dear good man, couldn't he just run up to the camp to get Colonel Berkley?"

"Can't leave the camp quiet without a colonel, you know we can't," said Hunter. "If you would rather have Berkley here than me"——

"Oh! no, no—won't say that; only change with him a while. You see you have been here all the afternoon."

"I'll be blown if I have! just down here long enough to put up the tables and smoke half a cigar. No, by Jove! you wan't to get rid of me, and substitute Berkley; I understand it."

"But where's Colonel Albee? Can't he take care of the camp to-night?"

"Albee's busy; however, I can tell him that you can't live down here without Berkley, and may carry the point."

As long as the point was carried, the ladies cared very little how it was done. They looked anxiously at the declining sun, but Colonel Hunter, regardless of the hint, waited to do full justice to his discontent.

"You are just like that fellow that takes photographs up in the village, ladies, only if it wasn't for your running in to get pictures, he wouldn't be pestering us to have them taken. Lord! Whipple, you noticed how he had his focus turned toward Berkley's end of the canvas. There wasn't a feature in my face that was distinguishable. Fellow bothered us nearly to death about it, so to-day Berkley took his staff, and I mine, and went up to the gallery. Suppose I shall see placarded Colonel Hunter and staff, and the ladies all saying, what a fine-looking staff and black-a-vised colonel."

"What! cried Captain Walby," do you mean to say you have had the staff photographed while I was absent?"

"Lord! Walby, I forgot all about you, I did, upon my soul; but the whole staff wasn't photographed; couldn't get them all together. I found two, and Berkley took line officers. Picture-monger said he didn't care; what

he wanted was the group; he was a genteel little fellow; he's a Yankee; keeps round the army; wants to make money, I suppose. Lord! that's what they all want. I asked him if he was a pre-Raphaelite; didn't suppose he could understand me, but Lord! yes, he was all posted up; flourished away about centre-pieces and subordinates, and so on. I told him if he was a pre-Raphaelite we would all go away again; but he swore he wasn't, and so as it was to be a wood scene, we all went out under the trees to arrange ourselves. I stood up in the middle, and got the rest all bestowed around, and Berkley sat off sideways on a rock at the end of the group, and I'll be blamed, when the fellow came out with his machine, his jaws fell a full yard. 'Come,' says I, 'I'm the central figure; look out for me and hang the subordinate figures.' By George! he wanted Berkley to come up alongside of me, shoulder to shoulder, like Siamese twins; but I wouldn't budge, and Berkley sat like a part of the rock. So after groaning over it considerably, he took the crowd just as we stood and sat. Finally he took us all pre-Raphaelite."

"How was that?"

"Why separately—that is, all but Berkley; he couldn't wait, and I reckon the fellow's got all the picture he'll get out of him. I staid to see the proofs of the group—Lord! Walby, you needn't be sorry you were not there. We all looked like a parcel of devils. Whipple had two heads and two pairs of arms; got nervous, you see, and turned towards me; and I was a great dim object, with no feet nor hands at all. Suppose the fellow will cut off Berkley's negative and throw the rest away. That was my advice to him when we parted."

As it was growing quite late, the Chardavoynes were unable to conceal their uneasiness, and Colonel Hunter was urged off with little ceremony.

It was not long before the evening reinforcements began to arrive. The grounds soon presented a scene of gaiety far different from their appearance during the more quiet hours of the afternoon. Middle aged ladies and young ladies, escorted in the proportion of one gallant to half a dozen, appeared in the successively straggling parties. Officers and gentlemen came in knots and groups, from camp and village, as soon after drill-hour as might reasonably be expected. The band attached to Col. Hunter's regiment had been for some time by the river-side, and occasional waltzers attempted circulation about the trees.

Sophia had introduced me to Miss Timberlake, and I led the conversation shortly to the art of painting, which I knew we should find a congenial subject. While we were conversing, a thin consumptive looking gentleman, about fifty years of age, came up to speak to Miss Timberlake. He thanked her for the late service she had rendered him, mentioned that he had just been at Mr. Hervey's, was told that the young ladies were at Honey Island, and had come down to see them. As he went on, I asked my companion his name.

"Mr. Laud, said she; a brother-in-law of Mr. Hervey. I have just been painting his niece's portrait for him—Mrs. Lionel Hervey."

As Mrs. Trueman had come up, this topic was dropped at once. Our trio took seats at a spot not the best lighted on the ground. Messrs. Walby and Whipplestaff had reinforced our group, and the gladdening vision of Captain Davis was shortly added to the party. We all bade him a cordial welcome, and he seated himself at the most available place, which was just by me. The people generally were at supper, and some coffee and sandwiches were distributed among our party. Captain Walby had declared frequently, he thought it time for

supper, but he looked askance at the sandwiches and scowled over the coffee.

"Miss Renshawe, haven't you lost a pocket-book?" asked Davis; and he produced a well worn article of leather, secured by a plain elastic strap.

"Oh, Captain Davis! you have found it! I am so, so grateful to you!" I exclaimed, warmly.

"My conscience!" exclaimed Captain Walby; "is *that* the pocket-book you have been making such a time about?"

"Captain Walby," said I, "this pocket-book was a last gift from my late father."

This mild rebuke, I trusted would put an end to the captain's strictures on my recent solicitude, and quite silenced he went back to the sandwich.

"Who told you I had lost a pocket-book?" I said to Davis, when the first flash of my gratitude had subsided.

"I knew by the contents."

This answer surprised me. My name was nowhere inside, not even a card; the only paper it contained was that prophecy of Canton Lecompton, which had remained there ever since my inspection of it at Mrs. Ostrander's. I was burning to ask Captain Davis some further questions, but he was too much engaged in listening to Captain Walby, who was explaining the intricacies of his connection with the great families of the realm; saying that he had always scolded his mother for not having named him Hamilton Livingstone Walby. As it was, he always called himself, Livingstone Walby—H. E. Livingstone Walby—sometimes at home he was called Horace, in a playful manner by his sisters, but Livingstone was really the name he delighted in.

"My family," began Captain Whipplestaff.

"Your family, what are you talking of?" said Walby, indignantly.

“Talking about the Whipplestuffs of cauth. The first Whipplestuffs came over in the fleet of Ponce de Leon, Captain Walby”——

“I thought that fleet perished off the face of the earth,” remarked one of the company.

Captain Whipplestaff said that was quite a mistake.

Walby turned a scornful shoulder, and Captain Whipplestaff addressed his narrative to Mrs. Trueman, respecting some manuscript left by his ancestor, containing a succinct account of the voyage and expedition.

At this juncture, the sound of some very clear voices became raised among the crowd, about the tables, and every one was silent to listen. A certain plea had been put in for the North; by what venturesome soul I did not discover; but venturesome he certainly was, who so spoke in the face of all those Confederate uniforms, and secession-badged coats. The gentleman who had spoken was not a Union man, or if he was, his sentiments were not uttered in full; but he had remarked, that the mass of people at the North were probably deluded by their leaders into believing that they had a warrant for their invasion on the Southern soil.

He was answered—answered in a voice I hardly recognized, it was so long since I had heard it. “No such delusion,” the speaker said, “could possibly exist. The gentleman did not know what the North was. Never was there a country so lowered, politically, socially and morally. A detestable Yankeeism—and that idea was one that no other term under Heaven could render—pervaded its society, to the same extent that it imbued the whole tone of its literature. The standard of those men who led the masses was not an elevated standard. He would not say that honor and principle were unknown at the North, but they were not the fashion there. The people were actuated by no other principle than the love

of plunder; by no other patriotism than the promptings of envy. As for the honor of the North, there were the Abolitionists, venomous snakes, who had been spitting their venom at the Divine institution of Slavery, who would see the very flames of the sun at mid-heaven quenched in blood without compunction, shrinking back from the open field now that it had come to actual contest.—Why, enough was said of the *honor* of the North in the fact that those men had not had their necks stretched years ago.”

The pale middle aged gentleman, whose name Miss Timberlake had said was Laud, asked Sophia the name of the speaker.

“It’s Colonel Berkley, of the —th regiment of North Carolina,” said Sophia.

“Very sound man,” was Mr. Laud’s rejoinder.

“Is that Berkley?” said Captain Walby, looking up with some animation. “Pretty well done for him I must say.”

Colonel Berkley’s interlocutor went on to say that the North did not know them, nor they the North.

“And God forbid,” rejoined Berkley, “that we should ever know each other better.”

The gentleman, growing bold from opposition, said that it was not well to listen always to one side of a case. He thought injustice had been done the North, by misrepresentation in the Southern papers; for instance, the common report connected with the enlistment of the notorious Wilson zouaves, must be an exaggeration.

If you think that the Southern papers,” said Colonel Berkley, “have exaggerated the fact, that a gang of pickpockets and thieves were recruited from the lowest dens in New York, to fill the ranks of the Northern army, perhaps you may believe the account their own press gives of the matter.”

A newspaper was here unfolded, and Berkley read aloud, in his most animated manner, an extract relating to the regiment alluded to—full of details of a scene at the recruiting office, where the commanding officer charged his “boys” that they would all be in hell in six weeks, and took a vote on their willingness to go there.

“Now, then,” demanded Berkley, as he crushed and threw aside the paper, “what shall be said of the canting hypocrites, who laud their own cause as the righteous and true, when they openly fight with such weapons as these? For those blasphemous wretches hell has reserved its blackest damnation, and the mercy of heaven itself is not equal to the stupendous task of their forgiveness!”

Such indignation as that manifest through the assembly it had seldom been my lot to witness, and considering against whom it was directed, its ebullitions were far from pleasant. Sparkling eyes—murmurs of “outrageous,” “abominable,” etc.,—murmurs growing almost into hisses, rose on every side. For my own part, all I could do was to possess my soul in patience, and reflect on the multitudinous ways in which the world did itself injustice. I sank under an invincible dejection, and from my obscure station, which I had now no wish to leave, watched the faces in the company, realizing how thoroughly I was among foes—every soul there, with the exception of those who, like myself, were nowhere, hostile to the cause in which my whole heart was bound up. I keenly regretted the circumstances that had thrown me here into a nest of rebels, where I was forced to listen to abuse of my country, and hear aspersions cast, and reflections made on the government, which were enough to outrage the common sense of those with whom prejudice had not gained the upper hand of reason. Chief of all I felt incensed against Berkley. Was I not conscious, in my

own soul, that in his representation of the North, he had known that he had not done justice to that great and magnanimous community? Could he be so deceived as to believe all he had said, or was I without the power to judge? At all events, never had I felt so roused. I watched the rebel colonel with a hostile heart, regarded with jealous eyes the evidences of favor in which he was held, and those evidences were numerous and conspicuous to a painful degree. He was always in a crowd. There was some one on the right, on the left, and before him continually. Ladies paused in the promenade to make passing inquiries, some even to offer their hands. I gazed as they floated about him, with their waving fans and graces, and marked his smiles, and words, and interested eyes, striving to realize that this was the man whose disloyal sentiments had been so recently, and so unpleasantly obtrusive.

I was not a little vexed with myself to find that I had been looking forward all the afternoon to a probable meeting with Berkley in the evening, with anticipations of pleasure. An unnoticed witness of the late scene, my sentiments had entirely changed. I felt now only unqualified, irrepressible indignation, and my determination was taken to avoid him as far as possible, and to quit Honey Island without seeing him at all. This was a very easy matter. As I before intimated, Berkley was at no loss for society, and until the moment that he quitted the ground not a word did he exchange with me.

It was about ten o' clock when the party broke up, and began to disperse with the carriages. Black Peter had gone for ours among the first servants so commissioned, but carriage after carriage rolled away, and ours came not. Everybody that we knew had gone except the Misses Chardavoyne, and Messrs. Hunter, Walby and Whipplestaff; and Sophia, growing very anxious at the

unaccountable delay, at last sent Colonel Hunter to see what had become of Peter and the horses.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW WE GOT BACK.

HUNTER came back and brought Peter with him, that faithful domestic being in quite a state of excitement. Neither horses nor carriage were to be found, and he had gleaned from some niggers that some thieves had been seen with some horses and carriages, and gone off somewheres, but nobody could tell where.

This was intelligence bewailed by the principal sufferers, and treated with sympathy by the rest of the party.

The first consideration that presented itself was to get home as well as we could. A set of open horse-cars ran all summer through White Chimneys. The last one for that night was just going. The Chardavoynes were among the passengers, and it was hailed by dint of considerable hallooing by three officers, and called upon to make room for nine persons. Room there seemed to be in plenty. The ladies of the party hurried in, and Captains Walby and Whipplestaff took the front seat just back of the driver. This car went nowhere near the Herveys', though it ran close to Mrs. Chardavoyne's, and after some consultation with Colonel Hunter it was decided that we should all get out at Stilesen's hotel, and there hire a carriage which should convey us home directly.

This arrangement had been happily perfected, when Colonel Hunter, leaving us in the care of the other gentlemen, and engaging to meet us at Stilesen's, went back

for his horse to the picnic-ground, while the car proceeded with its precious charge. It soon began to dawn upon me, from certain intimations in front, that our gallant escort, Walby and Whipplestaff, had partaken of the cup that cheers before it inebriates; at least Captain Whipplestaff's frame of mind appeared to be extremely cheerful. He was exceedingly good-natured, giggled incessantly, and addressed himself to his companion with a levity which that individual bore with singular patience.

"Have you got any cigars, Walby?"

Walby produced a roll of the twisted leaf which he handed his companion—the latter selected a cigar, and threw the package back—over Walby's head, out of the car. Walby rushed out, picked up the cigars, and ran after the car, which the conductor declared he could not stop for anybody—behind time, now, twenty minutes; and the captain regained his seat with some difficulty. Walby informed his companion, rather severely, that he had better not do that again. Whipplestaff's amusement on this charge reached its height. He giggled incessantly, annoyed Captain Walby by asking, "Did you get it?"—"Now really, you did not get it, did you?" and declaring, several times over, "Well, before I'd run so far for a roll of bad cigars, I'd buy another."

The next event that occurred to furnish variety, was, that Captain Whipplestaff, in his endeavor to knock off Captain Walby's hat, precipitated Miss Chardavoyne's parasol out of the car. The conductor swore the car couldn't be stopped for all the parasols in creation. Captain Walby got out thereupon, while the car was going, regained the parasol, and followed up the car with a much longer chase than the preceding one. Quite out of breath he regained his seat, and restored the parasol. Miss Chardavoyne thanked him most graciously, and Captain Whipplestaff giggled again to that extent that

all the ladies pronounced among themselves opinions antagonistic to his gentility. If these low-toned verdicts reached his ear, they had no effect on his hilarity, or his attacks against Captain Walby's hat, which he succeeded in knocking off about a dozen times. Captain Walby changed his position several times—several times said severely, "Don't do that again, Whipplestaff—you'd better not, really," all without effect. Pretty soon the hat went off as we were crossing a bridge. It went down into the water. Exclamations arose. The car was stopped, and while everybody was saying, "What a pity!"—"what a shame!"—"too bad!" etc., Captain Walby stood at the end of the bridge looking down with a very profound air, possibly quite forgetful of those lofty circles, whose sentence would be "exclusion," upon regret at such a trifling loss. The driver ran down the bank after the hat—disappeared under the bridge. The conductor, in a state of desperation took the reins. The car went on. Everybody inside called out not to leave so many people; so the car stopped again. Pretty soon, back came Captain Walby, the driver, and the hat. Captain Whipplestaff, a little sober during the pursuit, seemed threatened with convulsions, when Captain Walby looked at him, and advised him not to do that again! Probably contented with his recent success, Captain Whipplestaff limited further display of his wit to verbal attacks on his brother in arms, asking repeatedly, "Did you get it?"—"You wouldn't have got it if it had not been for that fellow in front." "He went down in the mud up to his knees." "I'd give him some money if I were you." "Really it's quite miwackulous about that hat of youahs, Walby. I didn't think you'd evah see it again."

Captain Walby treated the boyish folly of his companion with a silence that was quite sublime. We were very glad that the lights at Stilesen's gave warning of release;

and bidding the Chardavoynes "good-night," we went into the hotel, while Colonel Hunter hurried back to the livery stable connected with it to find a conveyance to take us home. After a lengthy tarrying in the parlor of the hotel on our part, Colonel Hunter rejoined us with the intelligence that we would be obliged to wait some minutes for the horses, and that in the mean time he begged we would come in and have supper before proceeding further. Supper would be ready in a very few minutes. Mrs. Trueman, it was plain, did not know how to refuse. After extorting a promise from Colonel Hunter that we should be informed at the precise minute the horses came, she consented, and we were ushered into a saloon adjoining, hung with secession colors, and took seats at a table where Stilesen's negroes were arranging cold fowls and wines in all the order that their profusion would admit of. In the middle of it all voices sounded without. Colonel Hunter, who had just laid aside his gloves for the task of carving, rushed to the door, and called upon quite a party in the hall to enter. One after another, in came the Misses Chardavoyne, Captain Davis, Captain Walby, and Captain Whipplestaff. An accident had happened to the car, and they had all come back to Stilesen's, to wait. Just as they were all established about the table it transpired that Colonel Berkley was without talking to Mr. Stilesen. Vigorous calls for Colonel Berkley ensued, and the Chardavoynes were at the summit of bliss when that gentleman appeared in all his glory.

If there had been any possible way in which, without making myself unduly conspicuous, I could have withdrawn from the company on the spot, I would have then and there taken a step to which my wrath against Colonel Berkley strongly prompted me. But to leave now, that everybody was seated at table, was a measure by which I

did not need to be told more would be lost than gained.

"Uncork the bottles, Berkley," said Hunter; "I'm glad you've come. Peter, what are you gaping at?—get the cork-screw!"

Colonel Berkley had just been speaking to me; it was true he had not said much, but something was due, considering how long a time it was since we had last met, and my replies were as satisfactory as ill-stifed resentment would allow me to make them. They were not so enchanting as to detain Berkley long, and the next minute he appeared to be quite oblivious to my stateliness, among the bottles in ice, which stood at his elbow. The corks came off, and the bottles were passed up the table.

"Now, gentlemen," said the outspoken Colonel Hunter, who, at this point, appeared to think some caution was necessary, "I beg you will not forget that this is not a mere gentleman's oyster-supper, though it is after twelve o'clock. Bear in mind that there are ladies present, and be careful of your language and your glasses."

"Sir," rejoined Captain Walby, in tones of rebuke, "I may safely say that I never exceed the bounds of decorum in my potations, and I never converse when with gentlemen in any different language from that which I use when ladies are present."

"You should be chaplain," said Berkley, while the ladies all gazed on the captain with approbation.

"It's a gweat humbug," murmured Mr. Whipplestaff. "Didn't you indulge in pwofane language to-night? I thought I heard something pwofane to-night, when you stood by the bwidge, Captain Walby."

"Captain Whipplestaff had knocked my hat into the water," said Walby, "and I appeal to every one present, if that was not an occasion where I played the gentleman and he played the fool."

"Not to use more gwaphic terms," put in Captain Whipplestaff. The tide had set in against him there, however. The gentlemen all exclaimed: "Oh, Whipplestaff—knocked his hat off—very wrong of you."

"Can't stand by you in that, Whipple," said Hunter. Captain Walby very superbly went on to express his pleasure that he found himself, for the first time that evening, in congenial society. The picnic had been such a horridly mixed affair. All sorts of people there. To be sure, it could not be very well avoided; but it was very unpleasant not to know who you would stumble on next. It was bad enough in the army; how persons of plebeian extraction had crept into the Southern army, it was impossible to say.

"I suppose he means me," said Captain Whipplestaff meekly. "Peter, give the cold chickens to Captain Walby, and pass him the wine. Colonel, it's time theah was anothah bottle in this divection!"

Another bottle was not long in coming, healths were offered and pledged by all the company. Quite unexpectedly, Colonel Hunter turned at last to me and asked for a toast. No excuse would be accepted, though one was feebly attempted—the glasses were filled anew—I saw that every eye was on me—all were waiting for my voice. It needed no temerity on my part to speak—it would have tested my self-command too powerfully to check those words at my lips. I lifted my glass and distinctly announced "The Stars and Stripes."

There was a dead pause! Colonel Hunter said gravely.

"I do not think we are equal to that! I leave it to Berkley."

"I have no objection to the United States flag, per se," said Colonel Berkley, more courteous in tone than in sentiment. "May it remain in its proper place, and be forgiven its trespasses."

"Well, you'll consent to modify your toast, Miss Renshaw," said Hunter; "stars and stripes, certainly; eleven stars lately subtracted from thirty-four, leaves twenty-three. You'll say twenty-three stars, won't you?"

"THIRTY-FOUR!" I answered; "my toast is the Stars and Stripes — forever may they wave over the thirty-four States of the American Union!"

Colonel Berkley replaced on the table the glass which he had taken in hand while awaiting my modification. His example was so far followed by the whole company that not a glass stirred. At all events, I had attracted attention enough for the present.

"Pray, Miss Renshawe," said Hunter, in a slightly bantering tone, "are you an abolitionist?"

If I had never been an abolitionist before, I could have become one on the spot, to reply to that question: "I am! Colonel Hunter." Resolutely this was spoken.

"My goodness, Miss Renshawe!" said Walby, "you needn't get up all that style to accompany such an announcement. We're not going to eat you for it."

"We'll drop politics, for the present," said Hunter, "and war into the bargain. Miss Renshawe, your first toast won't go down in this assembly; you may give us another. Give us something sentimental, or moral, or social, I entreat."

But Miss Renshawe was not in a temper of mind to frame anything more agreeable just then. Full of ire at the treatment to which the first toast had been subjected, the second was more daring still.

"Very well,—here's to the utter downfall of the slaveholder's institution, and the ruin of his unrighteous rebellion."

I was not embarrassed by the fact that nobody drank. I had not expected any such compliment. There was silence for one moment, then I heard Captain Davis say that the moon was up, and that it was a very pleasant evening.

This was sufficient intimation that nothing farther was expected from me, and having partially relieved my mind, I determined to say no more. While the supper lasted, the gentlemen, on whom my formidable toast appeared not to have made the slightest impression, entertained themselves and the company by numerous bonmots, anecdotes, and songs of a convivial nature. The bottle was passed and repassed, glasses were filled again and again; when the champagne failed, the Madeira was circulated; when the Madeira gave out, sherry was called for. The gentlemen imbibed and sang, and the ladies exchanged glances of apprehension.

In the midst of a song of a dozen stanzas, ending with the chorus, "One good time before we die," Sophia, who sat next me, intimated her intention of asking either Berkley or Davis to see us safely at home immediately. I objected on the ground that nobody there was responsible, and Sophia answered emphatically, "You are mistaken, Berkley took no more than two glasses, and Davis is sober, I am confident."

I gave mentally all the commendation that such instances of virtue could inspire. Davis was too much engrossed by the Chardavoynes, to have any attention to spare, and Berkley, after a moment's conference with Sophia, quitted both the table and the room.

"Now we will withdraw as soon as possible," said Miss Hervey to me. Taking advantage of the first opportunity, while the gentlemen were standing with brimming glasses, singing an ode to Dixie at the top of their voices, we left the building. Outside, in the starlight, stood a baggage-wagon and two horses. Berkley and Stilesen were busy with the harness about the horses' heads.

"If these be specimens of Southern chivalry," I remarked to Sophia, "I must say I prefer the manners at the North."

"Hush!" said she, in warning that Colonel Berkley was close at hand. I had known it before, and had intended him to hear. Whether he had or not, he let the observation pass unnoticed, and assisted us, one after another, into the conveyance. The Chardavoynes and Captain Davis all came out together. Davis bidding us a hurried good-evening went away on foot; the Misses Chardavoynes joined us in the vehicle.

"Can't we go now?" asked Sophia.

Berkley had sent for the curbs. He was unwilling to drive those horses, unused as they were to wheels, without them. The curbs soon came, but were not so soon adjusted. Before that task was complete the voices of the other gentlemen sounded within. No expedition could avail.

"You will drive us home, won't you?" said Mrs. Truman, earnestly, to Berkley.

"Certainly," replied the colonel.

"Oh, dear!" shrieked Miss Chardavoyne, apparently threatened with hysterics. "They will kill us all—they are dreadfully tipsy—dreadfully——"

"No, they're not," said Berkley, reassuringly. No further time was allowed for colloquy. The three gentlemen had rushed upon the scene.

"Well, Berkley," said Colonel Hunter, "what the devil were you thinking of to attempt such a thing as this! Don't you know you can't drive without smashing up my baggage wagon, and killing my horses? You haven't got the seats or the buffaloes adjusted. Walby, just help me spread down the buffalo-robe to protect the ladies' feet from the bottom of the wagon."

This charge exasperated Captain Walby beyond measure. "Sir," said he, drawing himself up to his full height, "Sir, my grandmother was a Livingstone, and do you suppose I would demean myself by touching a

buffalo-robe? No, sir, I have been taught to discard that sort of thing in favor of servants."

"Well, Chardavoyne," said Colonel Hunter, "if your grandmother wasn't a Livingstone, you can help me adjust the buffaloes. Hold the horses well, Berkley, Whipplestaff's standing on the wheel."

"I don't see how I'm a-g-g-going to get in," said Captain Whipplestaff, "or where I'm to sit when I have g-g-got in."

"That's right Whipple, look out for number one," said Hunter. The ladies all protested there was plenty of room. Captain Walby took his seat beside me, just behind that left vacant for Berkley.

"Are there four horses?" somebody asked.

"No, two!" "Four!" The assertion was hotly disputed. It was not settled till a plunge of the horses precipitated the whole party backward, and cast several caps out of the conveyance. Vigorous shouts of "whoa" on the part of the gentlemen, and a jerk on the reins from Berkley, who was still on terra-firma, restrained the steeds till the caps were picked up, and after three cheers for General Beauregard, our charioteer got in and we rode away.

Sophia leaned forward and asked Berkley in an undertone how soon we should be home. His reply, "twenty minutes," was consoling. His comrades kept up an incessant and boisterous mirth. A song broke forth with the inspiring refrain, "We'll hang Abe Lincoln on a gallows of wood." It was sung and resung, interspersed with shouts and laughter. "We'll hang him!" "Yes, we'll hang him to-morrow." "Can't to-morrow." "Well, to-night. Hurrah! I say, Berkley, won't we take Washington to-morrow, and hang old Lincoln?"

"Yes," replied the colonel.

"You hear that. He says yes," shouted Mr. Charda-

voyne. "What's the use of waiting till to-morrow? We'll hang him to-night. Colonel Berkley, can't you take Washington to-night?"

"Oh, certainly," replied the Colonel.

"I've been pondewing," said Mr. Whipplestaff, "if we don't hang him"——

"Oh, we will hang him. What in thunder are you talking about?"

"You don't heah what I'm twying to say. I say, if we don't hang him on a gallows"——

"Confound you, Whipple," roared Captain Walby, "why the deuce do you keep saying *if* we don't hang him? I tell you we will hang him. He's as good as hung now!"

"Well, suppose he is hung, then, you simpleton; I say, if it's not a gallows of wood, what kind of a gallows could it be that we could suspend him to, eh?"

This profound question seemed to puzzle the gentlemen vastly. Mr. Chardavoyne pulled at his glove tops, and shook his head vacantly. Captain Whipplestaff suggested another song. "Stwike up, Walby, and see if you can't pull the bwandy bottle from undah the seat. I'll take it the west of the way. Seems to me the hawses are wunning up the banks, Colonel. I've wost my equiwibwium thwee times since I set out."

The way was thus beguiled until the Chardavoynes' gate was reached, when the ladies descended. Mr. Chardavoyne halloosed to his sisters that he wasn't coming in then. He'd ride up to Mrs. Hervey's, and see the other ladies safe at home.

Mr. Davis had gone up the lawn with the young ladies, and the baggage wagon rattled on once more.

"I must really say," I remarked to Sophia, "that if these be Southern gentlemen"——

Hunter had overheard the unfinished sentence. "You raving still against the South, Miss Renshawe? What are you here for? Why don't you go back to the North?"

Nothing in the world could have roused my ire like this unceremonious suggestion. "I have a perfect right to be here," said I; "a perfect right to travel on any highway in the United States."

"We don't dispute that, madam," said Walby, "but this is not United States ground any more. There are rights, to be sure—two sorts of right, I admit. One, the right of private invitation, which you have, and the other, a political invitation, which you haven't; though we do allow all sorts of people to come here, and we tolerate them here. All sorts of trash and parvenues come just as they like"—

"And go away," said Captain Whipplestaff, "in the same mannah, with all sawts of lies about us at the North."

Mrs. Trueman said something about misrepresentations being likely to arise on both sides.

"None on our side," said Hunter. "Lord, we that have been to the North don't give half an idea of it. We can't. I didn't dream it would be such a place as I found it. Worst place I ever was in."

"Then why," said I quickly, "did you stay there, if you liked it so little?"

"Didn't stay. I came away as quick as I could. Women all a parcel of school-mistresses and hoydens. I never met one there that didn't carry a loaded pistol. One lady I knew personally knocked a man down with a piano stool."

"Exactly so," said Walby; "I knew a lady there that kept a knife on purpose to stab her husband when she wanted money. Used to drive him in a corner, and prick him with it, and I'm told it's the usual custom."

"And it's the custom theah," said Whipplestaff, "for the wadies to go awound and call on the gentlemen. Pwactice begins befoah they are well out of pinafaws."

"They have a day for that," added Hunter; "day after

New Year's. New Year's day is the gentlemen's day, and next day the ladies return the calls."

These audacious statements were evidently received without a question.

"That's it," said Whipplestaff. "The day after New Year's; and always, when a gentleman goes away, they follow him to the fwont doah, and help him on with his ovah-coat."

"A friend of mine," said Captain Walby, "called on a lady at the North, and she blacked his boots while he was there. Parlor full of company."

At this stage Mrs. Trueman spoke.

"I do not know, gentlemen," she said, "from what circles of Northern society your observations have been taken, but it is consoling to think that there are many where the manners you describe are wholly unknown."

A remonstrance like this, from so gentle a source, deserved more respect than it received. My own wrath was gathering, but I struggled to suppress it.

"Abolition circles," Hunter supposed, "up in Boston."

"I know nothing of Boston," said Mrs. Trueman. "I never was there. I alluded to other places."

"Well, they may have some refined enjoyments," remarked Chardavoyne; "Blue-stockings clubs, nigger revivals, and tea-drinkings, Boston, and elsewhere. Colonel Berkley knows—he's been there."

"Yes," cried Sophia Hervey; "let Colonel Berkley speak. "Are you not candid enough to acknowledge that there is good at the North?"

"I do not deny," said Berkley, while every one paused to catch the autocrat's opinion, "that there is a great deal that is good at the North, but it comes from the South."

"That's true," said Hunter. "All their clergymen and statesmen are from the South; and we gave them all their artists—even their actors."

This was more than all I had heard claimed for the South before. Still I strove to possess my soul in patience.

Sophia appealed to Berkley. "You," she said, "shall be our champion. You must own that there is native talent among the Northern people. Can you not give them credit for their artists, orators, and statesmen?"

"I might for the female element, Miss Hervey," he rejoined.

The discussion behind us had grown more noisy. Walby alluded to some recital of a "tar and feathers" adventure as "another Northern lie."

"Heaven deliver me!" I exclaimed, "from lies that are not of the North!"

Sophia admonished me that my language was too strong.

"I cannot help it," I cried. "I must speak. I have listened this night to the most outrageous calumnies, and from one who should have blushed in his inmost soul to listen to them! You have all heard and believed the story told you about the Wilson Zouaves, and I protest against it as an infamous, cowardly falsehood."

Berkley uttered a low laugh. It was echoed rather faintly, for the vehemence of my words produced an impression.

"The Northern women are geniuses," sneered Walby, "in every line of business."

"What could you expect?" demanded Berkley, knocking the ashes from his cigar, "when they act, they are unnatural and melodramatic—when they paint pictures, they fill their canvas with devils and brimstone; and, of course, when they protest and denounce they must be consistent."

Nothing could have incensed me like these words. I felt the ends of my fingers tingle with wrath, and tried to speak, but could not command myself sufficiently.

"My dear Louisa," said Mrs. Trueman, mildly, "you will be misunderstood. You do not mean to say that the Wilson Zouaves do not exist?"

"I know this," I cried, "that they have not done what those who rail against them are guilty of. There is more hope of the most degraded ruffian among them than of men here who do not scruple to engage in diabolical conspiracies, involving arson and assassination."

On these words, Berkley half checked the horses, turned about, and looked at me with an expression that fairly chilled my wrath. Hunter seemed thunderstruck.

"Good heaven! Miss Renshawe—you don't dare"——

"It's not of the slightest consequence," said Berkley. "This lady will dare to do nothing that will so far imperil her own reputation."

"What does she mean?" exclaimed Walby.

"Going to expose the Black Robin Club to the authorities," said Berkley, facetiously. "Will you try it in White Chimneys, madam?"

"Well," said Walby, pompously, "if we are convinced of nothing else, we are convinced, at least, of the violence and vulgarity of the Northern ladies."

"I advise you, for your own sake, to be silent," said Berkley to me.

"Come, come," Hunter interposed; "this has gone too far altogether. We'll drop the subject. We would be neighbors and good Samaritans, if we were all on a desert island. If we've quarreled all the way up, it's a good reason we should make up and be friends forever. I'm sure you'll all subscribe to that."

Somebody said "aye," but very feebly. Hunter pushed the matter, and urged us to shake hands all round; and as I had come to a better state of feeling, I actually leaned forward to offer mine to Berkley.

He turned away. Hunter reproved him, but there was no reply, and at that moment the vehicle stopped at the gate.

"Colonel Berkley," I urged, "you provoked what I said, but I retract it. I have no idea of saying anything about the Black Robin."

"You'd better resign the idea in White Chimneys, I think," he rejoined. The other gentlemen had descended, and were aiding the ladies out of the wagon. I was about rising, but Berkley's hand was on my shawl. "Has this termination been sufficiently agreeable to suit you?"

"Hardly," I answered, tremulously.

"Miss Renshawe next," said Hunter.

"You must wait for her," rejoined Berkley; and as I was attempting to pass he stopped me effectually. "Miss Renshawe does not leave this till I have kissed her as many times as there are States in the glorious and indissoluble Union." In the mean time I had endeavored to release myself, found myself a close prisoner, and desisted.

"It is impossible, sir," I said, with much emotion, that you are guilty of such coarse levity as this. Let me pass, and I will endeavor to forget it, or to disbelieve the unwelcome evidence of my senses."

"No levity about it. I'm in earnest." It became apparent that he was in earnest, as his threat was put in execution. "Say there are twenty-three States, Miss Renshawe, and I'll stop at that, or if you'll join the Confederacy, and subscribe to eleven, we'll split the difference. You like Northern manners, and I take compassion on you."

"Your insults, thank God, recoil on yourself," I gasped. Here I remembered myself, and stopped. I lifted my hands and turned my face upward. Stars, hills, and heavens swam before my eyes; but Berkley's low and heartless laugh rang out mockingly on my ear.

"Good Lord! you've been among the Sculptors. That's beautiful! It needs only a stake and a flame! It's a model for us. You see when you denounce the Black Robin we will be the martyrs, not you."

His arm relaxed. I caught Hunter's hand, and sprang to the ground. Berkley followed with my hat and gloves, which he mockingly offered at the gate. I had burst into tears as soon as my escape was assured; and as my sobs would not permit me to speak, turned away with a vehement gesture, not to be misconstrued.

"We are enemies, are we?" he said.

"Forever!" And my whole soul went out in that one word. The ladies had wished the gallant escort a stately good-evening, and the baggage-wagon rolled away once more.

I had governed myself, if not well, at least as well as I could, until we were within doors; but then came a reaction. Never in the whole course of my life had I yielded to such ungovernable passion. I utterly lost my self command. What I said is quite beyond my power to remember. The other ladies stood back, amazed and silent. Pretty soon the bell rang, and in came Mr. Davis with my gloves and hat, which Colonel Berkley had sent with a message.

At the announcement I astonished the envoy beyond measure. I crushed hat and gloves into the grate before his eyes, cried out to him to deliver no message to me from Colonel Berkley, if he ever expected me to speak to him again, and tore round the room, reiterating the charge till my voice was so convulsed with passion that I could say no more. Davis stood apparently lost in astonishment, and silently waited till the storm subsided. At last I came up, still unable to control my agitation, and attempted some apology for my violence, but it flamed up anew at the first mention of its occasion, and I fairly

deafened Davis by my declarations that if he dared to mention Berkley's name again I would never forgive him.

"My dear Miss Renshawe," protested Davis, "this is not the way in which a lady should behave when she is ill-treated. Allow me to remonstrate."

"Indeed," I demanded, "and how shall I behave?"

"Why, quiet and dignified, of course. That is the proper way to make an impression."

"I don't care to make an impression. I don't act for effect."

"I know you don't, but at all events you will listen to me. You are assured of my friendship. Now, then, come and sit down here quietly, and listen to me. You really ought to hear the message. I can't go back to report it as not delivered."

The calmness manifested by every one else had its effect on my nerves, and I grew sober enough to listen to Davis's manifold admonitions and counsels. He declared at once that, in his opinion, Berkley had acted very outrageously, and that he deserved to be knocked down and severely horsewhipped.

Everybody nodded assent. Davis represented that he did not wish to report to Berkley that he had left me in a passion. If I were thoroughly composed, my determination would have weight.

"Composed or not," said I, "I can listen to no apology whatever from Colonel Berkley."

"My dear Miss Renshawe," exclaimed Davis, "did you infer that the message I bring is of an apologetic nature?"

"If it is not I will hear it," I said, instantly. "My wrath needs fuel?"

"Colonel Berkley has sent me to tell you to leave the Confederacy within twenty-four hours."

"What is the penalty?"

"I do not know. That's the message."

For one moment I stood there almost overwhelmed by this announcement. A deeper wrath entered my outraged soul.

"Then, Captain Davis, you will take Colonel Berkley this answer from me. I will leave what you call Southern soil when I see fit to leave it, not before! Go within twenty-four hours I will not! Let him do his worst."

Mrs. Trueman uttered some words expressive of her indignation that Berkley should so conduct himself toward a guest in their family.

"It is all very unfortunate," groaned Davis, "but Miss Renshawe may rely on my aid as far as I can afford it. I can only give it by promoting peace between her and Colonel Berkley. He may regard her in a different light by to-morrow."

"Mr. Davis, it matters nothing to me how I am regarded by a scorpion. You see I am calm, and I charge you, as you are my friend, to attempt no reconciliation. I will thank you rather to increase the discord."

"Ah, that's easily done," he answered. "I will tell the Colonel the last word I heard from Miss Renshawe's lips was scorpion, and he will resign himself to an eternal enmity. Ladies, good-night."

CHAPTER XXIV.

WE were all seated round the breakfast table the next morning, with our souls wrought up to a pitch corresponding to that of the previous night, and loading the members of our escort with the opprobrium they severally deserved, when there was a bustle

in the hall, and suddenly, before they could be announced, or otherwise be heralded, in came Hunter, Walby, Whipplestaff, Chardavoyne, Davis, and last, though not least, Colonel Berkley.

We all rose at once, and as Berkley stood by one door, I ventured to leave by the other; but Colonel Hunter caught my hands.

"Come, Miss Renshawe, don't go. Here we are all in sackcloth and ashes. Ladies, ladies, give us a hearing. Mrs. Hervey, will you please to exhort these young ladies to listen?"

After this appeal, quite earnestly made, the ladies all paused, and Colonel Hunter, who appeared to be acting as spokesman for the party, proceeded: "Ladies, your faith in the decency of human nature must have led you to expect us. We have not come to justify ourselves; We cannot; but we confess candidly at once that we have behaved very improperly, very shabbily, very shamefully indeed, and we offer you all our earnest apologies, and our strong assurances that nothing of the kind shall ever happen again."

Mrs. Hervey, in a very agitated voice, acknowledged that the conduct of the gentlemen toward us all had been so thoughtless and culpable as to wound her and us beyond measure. She was gratified to find that the gentlemen regretted it, as she was aware that in the then unsettled state of society, the omission of this slight reparation would have brought them no censure.

"I do not hold," said Hunter, "that the unsettled state of society releases us from the obligation to be gentlemen. My dear madam, we are all a party of penitents, and for my own part I am ready to go on my knees to all the ladies in this room, and ask their pardon for my bad behavior, and for all the rest of us. And, ladies, you will sincerely oblige us if you will treat us as though soci-

ety was in its usual condition. If your heart prompts you to say up and down, 'Gentlemen, you are all a parcel of villains,' for heaven's sake say so."

Certain low-voiced exclamations from all the ladies of the assembly were audible. The tide had fairly set in Hunter's favor. I had changed my intention of quitting the room. I expected that Berkley would renew personally the charge he had given me by proxy, to depart from the insurgent States. I made up my mind to let him reveal all the blackness of heart which he possessed. I stood waiting the sentence, with my soul wrought up to defiance, still determining to hear without reply. In the meantime all the gentlemen had begun to plead their own cause, which they did with great fervor.

"This is quite a favorable termination," said Hunter, in evident glee at the issue. "Why, ladies, on the way up, we were in absolute despair; didn't dare to come without going after Davis—after Berkley—no, Davis—both of them; they are the only white sheep in the company."

"There is one apology due Mrs. Hervey, due all the ladies, from me," said Berkley.

These words called general attention. The rebel colonel went on to make his apology. He had sent a message, on the previous evening, to a lady who was Mrs. Hervey's guest, to leave the Confederacy. He desired to retract that message, and to declare to the family, and to the young lady herself, that he could never sufficiently regret that it was sent. That young lady, and indeed any guest of Mrs. Hervey, was entirely welcome to remain in the Southern Confederacy as long as she chose, and he would be most happy to have the honor of protecting her in so doing.

Flashes of my last night's ire came over me. The apology was made in a way that charmed everybody

present, and was accepted by all but myself. I stood with my heart and face in a glow, turned away from the speaker toward Hunter, who was bringing the scene to a close. Many adieux and "au revoirs" were uttered. The last words heard were those of self-accusation ; hopes that the ladies would not remember the past in the future ; assurances that a repetition of last evening's scene should never occur ; fears lest they were not entirely forgiven. In the midst of all this contrition, Davis came up to me.

"Berkley would like to see you a moment, Miss Renshawe."

"I must beg to be excused."

"I am really too ambitious of the office of peace-maker to take back that reply, Miss Renshawe."

"That is absolutely my reply."

Davis drew back. They were all going. In the last farewell, after which they reluctantly tore themselves away, it was obvious that all unpleasantness was entirely buried. Colonel Hunter shook hands all around, and blessed us most enthusiastically ; and as soon as he was out of hearing, he was pronounced by all our enchanted party, 'perfectly lovely.'

The sense of perfect loveliness was done justice to all breakfast time. Sophia at last said to me :

"I forgot to tell you that Berkley was very desirous to speak to you, Louisa."

"And why did he not ?" said I. "I staid, though I should have left the room. I am sure that gave tacit consent to converse with any one that was here."

"No ; he said he did not dare to speak to you, especially as you did not notice the general apology he made for his message to you."

"Say no more about him," I exclaimed ; "I am glad I saw him this morning ; now I know of a truth that I detest him. The very sound of his voice is odious. I have done with the whole Southern Confederacy forever."

At ten o'clock there was more news from the town. The Southern troops that had occupied White Chimneys had all gone, were in full retreat from the place, to a man.

This was the first news. Later in the day the facts were elucidated. Colonel Albee was still in White Chimneys, his regiment being necessary to hold the place, but Colonels Hunter and Berkley were many miles away.

CHAPTER XXV.

MILES away sounded the steady roll, like that of muffled thunder, which had agitated all White Chimneys on the 18th day of that July. It had been over long before anything farther than a thousand uncertain and distracting rumors, brought us any explanation ; but Mr. Hervey soon came up from town with the details.

There had been a battle ; that was certain. The Union troops had attacked a Confederate force at Blackburn's Ford, and had suffered a repulse. Mr. Hervey reported the excitement at White Chimneys as excessive. Secession flags were hoisted through the town. Stilesen's was up all the while the battle was raging. Mr. Hervey had received several intimations, on the way back, that made him think it best to remain at home until the public fervor was allayed.

Sophia's indignation, long nursed in silence, found vent in some sentences condemnatory of the Southern rebellion, and those who took part in it.

"We cannot rail against them," said Mr. Hervey ; "our tongues are tied. This strife is fratricidal—suicidal ! Those who fight us are not only our brothers, but—our—

selves. We can only be silent and trust in God for the issue."

This observation, breathing the spirit that actuated the North too long to its own injury, brought no answer from the group. Mr. Hervey spoke again.

"I met my brother-in-law this morning, at Stilesen's, and we are all invited to his house to-night. It is a small party, as I understand it—a military party. I had not the heart to ask many questions. I accepted the invitation, and we must set out early. I am fearful of the new horses, and would like to cross the river before sunset."

From Mr. Hervey's uneasy manner, I felt inclined to believe that he was fearful of other things than the new horses.

"Go!" cried Sophia; "how can you speak so, brother? We cannot go; *I* will not. I am a loyal woman, and how can I, after this battle, so decided, go to the house of a rebel, to meet rebel soldiers, whose hands are imbrued in loyal blood?"

"Sophia," said Mr. Hervey, gravely, "there are issues at stake which you do not realize. I must give up this happy home, and we will soon all be outcasts. The thunderbolt falls directly *here*! The desolating fiend has chosen this spot to be blasted by his fires! This State is to be the theatre of war; these lands will be laid waste by the fire and the sword; these forests and plains will be a barren wilderness. We do not know how soon the change will come. To-night we go to this house, and to-morrow we may be glad to find it our asylum. My brother-in-law spoke of the possibility this morning to me. Again, our family suffers much from the malice and dislike of the neighborhood. Should we not go, our conduct will be construed amiss. Only this day sneering remarks have been made to my face. If I am ever to

escape, with my family, the fate which I dread for them, we must be solicitous to avoid all censure now."

The good sense of these observations was beyond dispute. Sophia yielded, though I plainly saw how unpleasant was the necessity.

"We will be forced to endure much that we might wish to avoid," continued Mr. Hervey. "My brother tells me that Mary will be there."

A sudden damp on these words pervaded the spirits of the party. Sophia's lips were compressed, as though with pain.

"We will be forced to be reconciled at some time," remarked Mrs. Hervey; "it may as well be now."

"The cup is full," said Mrs. Trueman, with a sigh of resignation; "I had hoped never to see that woman again. Sophia, what do you say?"

"I am quite prepared for anything," replied that young lady. "Matters can't be very much worse than they are. If she bows to me I can survive it."

"What shall you do about it, father?" inquired Mrs. Trueman.

"My advice would be to receive her," replied Mr. Hervey.

"Receive her," repeated Mrs. Hervey. "My dear husband how can you speak of it? She is a very wicked woman."

"I know," replied Mr. Hervey, "but as we cannot deny the connection, we may as well reap some of the advantages of it. She has been a great favorite among the rebels at Richmond, and I know is anxious to be received by us. We may find her assistance invaluable at some time when we stand in need of a friend.

"I would not accept such assistance," said Sophia.

"My dear child," replied Mr. Hervey, "when you are as old as I am, you will find that it is a foolish thing to

make an enemy needlessly; and in this case the enmity would be powerful. I do not advise any hypocrisy toward the girl; all I counsel is to treat her civilly. It will be no more than your duty, need do no violence to conscience, and will leave you nothing to regret."

My interest was strongly awakened by this colloquy, and it was not without some hope of having it gratified that I followed my companions to the scene of their preparations.

"Papa seems to imagine," remarked Mrs. Trueman, "that we may be going on a longer journey than we anticipated at first."

"I shall pack my trunk," replied Sophia. Mr. Laud may take us for a caravan; but his house is large and would hold five times our number."

We moved about for some time, taking refuge in the bustle of preparation from thoughts of a more saddening kind. Caroline first alluded to the expected evening.

"The officers," she said, "will not feel much like coming, if any of them were shot in battle this morning."

"Those that are shot will not feel like coming," said Sophia; "but it will not hinder the rest. If all his staff were killed before his eyes to-day, Colonel Berkley would go to a ball to-night quite as readily."

I knew of no grounds on which I might dispute this assertion.

"Mrs. Trueman now made an allusion to the other subject that had attracted my interest, asking what they were to do about "Mary."

"Louise knows nothing about her," remarked Sophia. "You must be made aware that the individual whom we were this morning discussing is my nephew Lionel's wife."

I said I had supposed as much.

"You would be inclined generally to look upon Major

Hervey as a sensible being, would you not?" Sophia proceeded. I assented, of course.

"Once upon a time," Miss Hervey continued, "his good sense failed him at the very crisis where he stood most in need of it."

"It is a *mésalliance* I believe?" said I.

"I wish," returned Sophia, "that it were nothing more than usually comes under that name. When a man marries a woman who is rich, young and very beautiful, the world would find some other name for it I infer."

"I am then to conclude," I remarked, "that marriage is a lottery in which Major Hervey drew a blank."

"He held an exceedingly bad ticket," said Sophia; "and I will leave it to you, whether I ought to be civil to a woman whom I believe capable of committing any crime, for the sake of propitiating all Rebeldom?"

"Certainly not, if you think her so very wicked," said I. "Does your brother know her character?"

"Oh, my brother looks on these things in a different light; he's a man, and men always have more charity toward our sex than we have for each other. Beside this, woman is very fascinating. She has charmed him; also Mr. Laud. He is perfectly bewitched. Every man who knows her thinks the same."

"I suppose you counseled Major Hervey against such a marriage?"

"No, we didn't. Before we knew anything about it, hardly who she was, they were married. She was the adopted daughter of George Berkley's uncle, Mr. John Brandegees. She was under General Berkley's guardianship for a while, and created a great commotion there. Mrs. Berkley said Dan was absolutely in love with her; and he was a man as little likely to fall in love as any one I ever knew. Then Colonel Berkley was engaged to her until she behaved in such a horrible manner that they

were obliged to dissolve the engagement, and send her away from the house. We know all the circumstances, but we are not at liberty to disclose them."

At one clause in the revelation, my preparations had come to a full stop.

"Miss Brandegge!" I repeated; "and once engaged to Colonel Berkley! I heard of her from Mrs. Ostrander, from several persons. Is that the lady whom your nephew married?"

"That's the lady," Sophia answered, "whom my brother was duped into marrying. Mrs. Ostrander takes her part, and has probably told you that the Berkleys were in the wrong, but I know they could not have acted otherwise. Mrs. Ostrander is one of the few whom Mary has been able to deceive; and as the Berkleys were too honorable to say anything about her, she usually stands well with her new acquaintances till she gets found out. Lionel is probably sorry enough that he married her, though he will not acknowledge it."

"She is beautiful, you say?"

"Very; did you ever see Hildebrandt's Desdemona, that was on exhibition at the Dusseldorf Gallery in New York for so long? Mrs. Lionel Hervey is the living reproduction of that picture."

The conversation here was dropped, and we were too busy with the melancholy task of preparation to resume it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BY eight o'clock that evening, we rode into the village known as Luney's Lock, and stopped before the most pretentious and brilliantly lighted mansion in the principal street. The event of the battle at

Blackburn's Ford had evidently not changed the plan of Mr. Laud's hospitality, however it had agitated his household.

"You are to be hostess to-night," said he to Mrs. Hervey, as he met us at the gate. "I have been watching for you an hour."

We were ushered into the brilliantly lighted hall, and up the broad staircase, by a negro in a footman's livery; and hastened to put the finishing touches to our respective costumes, before appearing in the parlors. The house was furnished with elegance which its exterior had scarcely promised. The appurtenances of the rooms, designed for use, were of elaborate workmanship; while the merely ornamental decorations were of value, betokening great wealth on the part of the owner. But I could not bestow more than a passing consideration on any embellishments of the sort. There was a great weight on my mind, which I hoped after that night to be relieved of. Captain Davis's allusions on the evening at Honey Island, made me determine that more of an explanation would have been accorded me, had an opportunity offered, and I intended, if he should be at Mr. Laud's this night, the opportunity should be taken. My chief dread was that of meeting Colonel Berkley. My mind was wrought up to that pitch, that I desired neither to see nor speak to him again; and though I knew it would be quite possible to avoid him during the evening, still I was fain to avert the prospect of the agitation that his appearance would cause, by reflecting that Mr. Laud did not know him, and it was scarcely possible that he had been invited.

In the library, a small room on the first floor, where I stopped to await the rest of the party, a portrait poised on a table against the walls, without frame, and evidently but just finished, attracted my attention. My gaze was

riveted, when I perceived that the face was one of touching beauty. It was the face of a very young female, and the strong likeness it bore to the Desdemona in Hildebrandt's master-piece, would have led me to think it a copy of the same, had not Sophia's remark about the likeness, raised an immediate suspicion of the identity. It was a fallacy, I thought, that the face was the index of the soul; for that expression did not betray the demoness.

As the minutia of the party dress had been attended to before we set out, it was not long before the rest of the party descended, and I was called away from my contemplation to follow them to the drawing-rooms, where the guests were already beginning to assemble.

Rank secession breathed in all the air around—even from the leaves of the plants outside the windows of the hall. The glass doors which opened all around the house, admitted the refreshing air of the summer evening, which circulated as freely as under the trees and shrubbery, forming a delightful shade about the house. A red flag stretched across the chimney-piece, engraven on which, in large letters, were the words, "Battle of Centreville, July 18th, 1861. Success to our arms." In the farther saloon was the figure of Justice, painted on a shield; over her head, "God for the right," shone out in sparkling characters. In one hand she held a drawn sword, and from the other floated the flaming capitals "C. S. A." A company, in which I looked in vain for a familiar face, was assembled in the parlors, but apart from the flaunting badges that checkered the throng, and the rebel insignia displayed on the walls, there was something in the ill-dissembled exultation which shone on every face, that would have revealed to me how the battle had affected it. I saw it with a shrinking of the soul which I did not attempt to mask on my features, and after my introduction to Mr. Laud, drew back with

the single wish of remaining as unobserved and as undaunted as possible.

There I was alone in the crowd. I gazed on the moving figures, the waving fans, listened to the gay voices, recalled the oft-applauded peculiarities of the Southern manner, which was all *abandon* and all good breeding, and asked myself, in witnessing this tacit exultation over a temporary triumph, whether the battle of Centreville had really decided the fate of the nation. It seemed so there. A sense that was worse than that of mere isolation oppressed me. The Herveys were used to it, seemed in a measure to have fallen in with it; they appeared to have effected a sort of compromise, but to me there was no such feeling—they were all foes.

I had drawn back behind Mrs. Hervey's chair, and she was talking to her brother about the officers. Mr. Laud said he did not know who was coming. He had given Colonel Hunter carte-blanche to ask all he could muster, but that being several days before the battle, perhaps Colonel Hunter had forgotten all about it. Lionel had gone to the camp that afternoon, however, and had promised to refresh his superior officer's memory.

But neither Colonel Hunter nor the officers to whom he had seen fit to extend Mr. Laud's invitation, were so oblivious. Before ten o'clock, the rooms were alive with steel and buttons, and I was looking among their numbers for familiar faces, when I was diverted from the scrutiny by the sight of a young lady, who looked in at the hall door. The air and manner of this female, were in themselves sufficient to rivet my gaze, apart from the recognition that revealed her as the original of the portrait, which I had seen in the library. The figure was one of unrivaled elegance, in spite of the fact that it was rather under the medium height, and the large dark eyes, so full of soul, were the ruling feature of a beautifully

moulded face; while the self-possession and grace of the young lady's air, were strangely contradicted by the youth and freshness of her countenance.

After a moment's scrutiny of the apartment she came just inside the door, swept after her the train of a dress elaborate and very long, and resting one gracefully rounded arm, banded with a string of jewelry, against the piano, turned her girlish face toward a group of officers with a bow of salutation, which brought one of their party at once to her side.

It was Captain Davis. He had actually come, and not knowing how soon he might go, and eager not to lose my opportunity of speaking to him, I crossed the room until I was so near the hall door as to render it a foregone conclusion that he should see me next. Almost at the same time Mr. Laud came up to shake hands with Davis, and I heard him ask where Colonel Berkley was to-night. A sudden displeased contraction appeared on the face of the young lady; her large full eyes flashed up as though with pain, and her lips were momentarily compressed; but the next moment all was serene as ever. Captain Davis informed Mr. Laud that Colonel Berkley and Colonel Hunter, both, were exceedingly busy—it would be impossible for them to come very early, and possibly they might not come at all. As soon as Mr. Laud had gone on, Captain Davis fortunately saw Miss Renshawe.

I did my best immediately to promote Captain Davis's entertainment, and prevent his wandering away; my great scheme for the evening being to elucidate his knowledge of Mr. Lecompton's mysterious letter. Remarks were made on the trees, on the music, on the statuary, on the wind; on everything in short, but the battle, which we both avoided by tacit consent; and on the one subject which I longed but did not know how to approach.

Major Hervey had approached our group, but did not

interrupt our tête-à-tête, only to address in a half whisper the lady I had so admired; it was received by her with eyes fixed on vacancy, and a negligent toss of the fan against the piano-case; a careless monosyllable was given in answer to his question; then she took his arm, and he led her across the room, and introduced her to Mrs. Hervey.

"Who is that young lady you were just conversing with, Captain Davis?" I asked.

"Mrs. Lionel Hervey."

I had thought as much, and the suspicion would have been sufficiently confirmed by the dignified yet very conscious air with which her mother-in-law received her. She did not linger long in that vicinity; just as I was pondering how to begin the subject of Lecompton's letter, Mrs. Hervey came back, and Davis had gone off with her.

"How are you charmed?" asked Sophia, in a low tone.

"With Mrs. Lionel Hervey? I admire her appearance much."

"I supposed you would. Her appearance is prepossessing. I wonder what Mr. Laud was thinking of, to ask Colonel Berkley. I should think his meeting with her would be very unpleasant."

"He may not come."

"Hush!"

A crowd of officers were just passing through the hall door. At Sophia's warning intimation, as to who was among them, my pulse thrilled with a new agitation. How was I to behave? what should I do? In order to gain time I looked persistently over the piano music, and seriously contemplated a withdrawal from the room. In the mean time, the latest arrived deputation had moved across the floor to Mr. Laud, and I distinctly heard that gentleman say:

Colonel Berkley, I am very happy to see you, sir. Colonel Hunter, you do us honor—glad to see you all, gentlemen, and to exchange mutual congratulations on the late successful defence of our flag. My heart has been with you.”

“His heart seems to be with them still, judging from his manner of shaking hands,” said Sophia in a low tone to me. “All in new coats, or somebody has been rubbing up the trimmings—very resplendent. Why do you not look? Alexander has his shoulder turned.”

Being quite decided by this time, I looked around leisurely. The officers, having finished their greetings, passed on. Berkley retained his place beside Mr. Laud and Mrs. Trueman. Some compliment was paid by the colonel to the loyalty of his host, and looking up at the Confederate flag, Berkley raised his hand to his forehead and gave it a slight upward motion, as though conveying his salutation to the colors.

“That’s graceful!” pronounced Sophia.

“I have seen it better done in a circus,” I answered; “it’s precisely the flourish a circus-rider makes when he has accomplished some feat that he regards as peculiarly striking.”

Just then Captain Davis came in from the adjoining room with Mrs. Hervey, and they walked on quite near the spot where I was standing. Mrs. Trueman looked up; a slight bow was exchanged with her sister-in-law. Berkley turned his head, and he and Mrs. Lionel Hervey saw each other at the same instant.

Berkley stood like one transfixed; but his color had not varied a shade, while in spite of herself, Mrs. Hervey’s face was crimsoned with a flush that forsook it the next instant as tumultuously. She seemed to hesitate, while his calm, expectant look was fastened on her features; then she bent her head coldly. Berkley replied by a deferential bow, and turned once more away.

By the time Mrs. Hervey and Davis had come up, I saw that her agitation at sight of her former lover had not entirely subsided. I was thinking again of the Lecompton letter, and when Mrs. Hervey had seated herself by Sophia, I remarked to Captain Davis that the evening was very warm, and that, no doubt, it was much cooler in the shrubbery, where several of the guests were already promenading. Davis immediately gave me his arm to the shrubbery, and we were soon strolling up and down the beaten path outside, and under very favorable circumstances for conversation, those that passed us on the grounds catching only a few disconnected words. I began, as usual, in a very roundabout way, catechised Captain Davis about camp-life, and about the customs of Louisiana, and about the laws of civilized warfare. All these topics being thoroughly discussed, I went from civilized to uncivilized warfare, and from uncivilized warfare to Mr. Lecompton. Just as I reached that point, everybody was called in to supper.

Having progressed so far, I thought it would be too bad to give up at that point ; consequently, I intimated to my companion that an important subject was at hand, which I was sorry to have interrupted. Mr. Davis offered to sacrifice the supper ; but being quite hungry myself, I did not see fit to entertain the proposition, and he promised to discuss it fully in the course of the next hour.

During supper I managed to be next Mrs. Lionel Hervey, and we held a conversation of which I do not remember a word, and of which she probably absorbed quite as little, as her looks were rather disturbed. Just as nearly everybody was strolling back to the parlors and grounds, and I was thinking of Captain Davis again, Mrs. Hervey, who stood close by me at the door, asked if I knew Colonel Berkley.

"Yes, that is to say no," I answered a little hastily, but taking care to make my negative very emphatic. The next instant I saw Berkley close at hand. He had stopped, but, I perceived, not to speak to me; it was to Mrs. Hervey.

"It is a very long time since I have had the pleasure of meeting you," said she, lifting her great, grave eyes to his face.

"So long, that I hardly expected to be recognized by you," said Berkley.

"Oh, certainly," replied Mrs. Hervey. She was a little nervous but strove hard to command herself. "I should recognize you always, I am sure. I am not the author of the opinion that you are not very easily forgotten, Colonel Berkley."

Preferring to take this statement in its most complimentary sense, Berkley bowed gravely, and remarked that he had heard of Mrs. Hervey several times during the last few months; indeed, he believed he had several times been on the point of meeting her again, but had never had that happiness till to-night. The conversation appeared to be nearly exhausted on Mrs. Hervey's part; for she sighed without reply, and Berkley was already looking away, when Captain Whipplestaff rushed up tumultuously.

"There are two pwaces unfilled in the saloon, Colonel; they've sent me to beg you to dance—youah not engaged for aftah suppah—won't you dance with Mrs. Hervey?"

Both Mrs. Hervey and Berkley looked at Captain Whipplestaff as though at a loss what to do. Extrication from the dilemma was easy enough, had Mrs. Hervey chosen it; but when Berkley's arm was offered, she took it after a faltering attempt at an excuse, and they walked away. As I had been talking to my right-hand neighbor

with my back turned on the scene as soon as Berkley drew near, he had not seen me so far face to face, and I was just thinking again of Lecompton, when Colonel Hunter rushed up.

“Who is disengaged? Oh, Miss Renshawe—one last place—I must have a partner—will you do me the favor?”

I began to say that Mr. Davis——

“Davis, he’s dancing—come, they are all waiting for us.”

I immediately consented, and we walked into the third room, where the last set was formed, and took our places. It so happened that we were *vis à vis* to Mrs. Hervey and Berkley. I felt that that gentleman’s eyes were upon me, expecting a recognition; but I was resolute—it did not come. Throughout that dance I was quite exultant, and walked through its mazes, ignoring the fact that Mrs. Hervey had a partner, as far as possible. I moved through all the figures without touching his hand, which he did not offer very often, when my line of conduct became obvious. I remembered, in the Children of the Abbey, similar conduct on the part of Lord Mortimer toward the heroine had been pronounced at our reading circle, at Renshawe, a great piece of rudeness; but, considering all the circumstances, I held myself more than justified on the present occasion.

“I don’t see how in the world Berkley manages not to step on Mrs. Hervey’s dress,” said Colonel Hunter to me in the progress of the dance; “upon my soul, it’s a penance to dance with such preposterously long-skirted women. I never dance the second time with a woman who wears a trail—by Jove! her skirt measures a full yard on the floor. She nearly upset all four of you ladies in the whirlwind figure just now!”

Colonel Hunter’s indignation against the trait increased all through the dance. “Almost thrown by it!” he an-

nounced ; "by Jove! what under the heavens does a woman expect to gain by setting a trap for a man's heels? I get caught sometimes—see ladies sitting down and ask them to dance, and then have to be put on my dexterity all through the performance ; and if you do happen to step on them—my conscience, what thundering black looks they do punish you with!"

I was relieved when the dance came to a close ; of course I joined the group to which Davis belonged immediately. Captain Walby, who had been strutting about with his most supercilious air, had only waited for my presence, to make another humiliating reflection.

"This is not one of your Chardavoyne and Timberlake hashes," he said. "There really appear to be people here."

"The Chardavoynes and Timberlakes are people," replied Sophia.

"They do very well for White Chimneys, but this is a place of more consideration. A man who entertains here is not driven to invite all sorts of cattle. He has real aristocracy at his command. Miss Renshawe, will you dance with me?"

I was quite amazed at the invitation, but declined dancing during that set, and when I took the vacated seat by the window, Davis joined me. I had decided that the parlor was the best place for the conversation I desired to hold, as the noise was quite sufficient to drown our voices. I reminded Davis that we had been talking about Mr. Lecompton, and I asked shortly whether he could tell me anything of the reason that had prompted that gentleman's prediction, by which he (Davis) had fastened the ownership of the lost pocket-book on me.

Mr. Davis was in a very communicative temper, a disposition with which he contended at first, as he could only be brought to acknowledge that he knew something about it.

The first mention of the Black Robin unlocked his tongue. That organization being, as he assured me, all broken up, and its disciples dispersed, Davis felt no hesitation in talking about it. He told me in full the circumstances that had led him to join that society, eulogized its harmless character, and enlarged on the service it had done the world. To all this I listened patiently, till Davis declared that he was utterly overcome to find that a lady among his esteemed and valued acquaintances was in full knowledge of its most indefensible schemes.

The announcement had first been made by Berkley to a few counselors, among whom was Governor Chives. This course of Berkley's Davis fully defended. His oath obliged him to inform the Club when it was endangered. Chives had chosen Lecompton to look after Miss Renshawe, and to report her proceedings for the next few days.

Davis had known nothing of all these transactions until one evening, when, to his utter amazement, Governor Chives had decreed that Louisa Renshawe was to be put out of the way.

"What do you mean by that—my life?" I asked.

"Yes, Miss Renshawe, your life! nothing less. You have too much good sense, I trust, to lay that up against the Governor."

"Oh, certainly," I answered, "a little thing like that can be easily pardoned. But go on. What induced the Governor to alter that decision?"

"Well, we were all quite shocked, because we knew you so well, yet no one ventured to remonstrate but Berkley. He pleaded very earnestly for you, Miss Renshawe."

"Probably he felt some compunctions for having been instrumental in leading me into such danger."

Davis smiled. "I think not, Miss Renshawe. Berkley

is not given to such compunctions. I cannot account for his course. I know I was very much surprised to find that he did espouse your cause so earnestly. He thought the sentence was rather too severe."

It was not unnatural that a transient emotion of gratitude should cross my heart at these words, but I steeled myself against it.

"Mr. Lecompton then produced one of your letters which he had intercepted that day, as it bore a Southern postmark."

A cold chill ran over me. "A letter from my mother, Mr. Davis?"

Davis owned that it was. This letter Lecompton offered to the company, not that it had any connection with the charges against Miss Renshawe, but rather to throw light on her mind and motives.

"And was that unimportant epistle handed about very extensively?" I asked.

"It was submitted to three or four of us," said Davis, "and Mr. Lecompton asked Governor Chives whether Miss Renshawe's regard for one of our party might not mitigate the severity of her sentence."

"Was there any speculation as to which of your party it was?"

"Oh, certainly. We were all of opinion that it was Berkley. None of us knew you so very well, Miss Renshawe, and he had met you rather more frequently. He did not believe it at first, but after reading the letter seemed more inclined to that opinion himself, and this circumstance he immediately turned to your advantage."

"How was that?"

"He at once offered to the Governor to be responsible for all your actions, and answered for you that you intended no one there any harm. Governor Chives consented finally to spare your life, and to accept the respon-

sibility, on one condition. That was, that Berkley should offer you all the attention in his power, and that as your heart had been given to him, which none of us doubted, he should rivet that infatuation as well as he was able."

My heart swelled high with indignation. "And did Mr. Berkley accept the condition?"

"He did, Miss Renshawe. I assure you, your life could have been guaranteed on no other terms. Mr. Lecompton launched out into a flowery remonstrance. He called Berkley heartless and criminal, and said that to a girl like Miss Renshawe, death would be far preferable to such a captivity."

"And did that make no impression on Mr Berkley?"

"Not the least. His mind was made up, and he listened quite unaffected. Told Lecompton to seal up the letter, and send it to you, and promised the Governor to follow his counsel, and to take care of Miss Renshawe's knowledge of the Club. One thing was certain, the Governor gained an impression that Miss Renshawe was quite an uncommon girl."

"He must have seen that," I answered, bitterly, "but now tell me how you identify me with the subject of Mr. Lecompton's prophecy."

"Instantly. You see it was just like Lecompton, with his opinion of Berkley's fascinations, to warn you against their danger."

Mr. Lecompton seems to have been the best friend I had in the honorable category."

"I can't say that I agree with you there. Berkley staid in New York some time after we had left, until the Black Robin agitation had fairly cooled, only to protect you from danger—staid after he knew it was hazardous for him to be longer at the North. Next to him, I think I may claim to stand on the list of your friends: for, my

dear Miss Renshaw, unable as I was to serve you there, perhaps I may be of more effectual aid to you here."

I held my fan so as to shield my face from the lights, but Davis saw the tears that fell silently from my eyes.

"Can I do nothing for you?" he asked.

"Would you advise me to leave the South?" I inquired.

"I certainly do so advise you."

"How does Mr. Berkley propose to avenge my disregard of his injunctions? He told me to go, and you see I am here yet."

"Berkley has made up his mind to let you severely alone?"

"Has he said so?"

"No, he has not mentioned your name; but I see that such is his intention."

"Then I am quite ready to go; but I fear I shall find it a matter of no little difficulty."

"In the present state of the country you will. But I will aid you by every means in my power, if you will allow me."

I thanked Davis warmly for the promise, and he engaged to furnish me with a pass in a day or two, and to find some one crossing the lines, who would escort me safely home.

Our conversation ended soon, as it had been deferred till so late in the evening, and the party was just breaking up.

Sophia Hervey was talking busily to Berkley at the door. Their tête-à-tête had lasted some time. I evaded them by that entrance, and made my way to the upper hall, where the crowd was not so great, and the danger of fainting less imminent. Adieux were interchanged with the ladies, above and below. Several officers were in the lobby.

The gentlemen had gathered around the picture of

which I have spoken. "How beautiful!" "Divine!" were the expressions which greeted my ears. Colonel Berkley, having done talking to Sophia, stopped at the group, and glanced at the picture.

"Isn't it beautiful?" said Captain Walby

"Very inferior to the original," answered the colonel. Sophia, who leaned on the balustrade, greeted this statement with a significant "humph," as the speaker passed on.

"It must have been an unpleasant meeting for them," I remarked. "Were they not much attached formerly?"

"No," she replied. "It was a match of interest altogether, on his side, if not on hers. The woman is rich as a Jew."

I stood there filled with deep, intense humiliation. I was not only angry now, but wounded to the soul. Lecompton, a raving, fantastic enthusiast, had read me more rightly than the man in whom I had found so much imaginary nobility. For so many months all these confederate plotters had known my absurd infatuation, and Berkley had been base enough to cherish it instead of giving me up to a fate that would have been preferable to such captivity. Crushed and sad beyond expression, I longed to flee at that moment from the face of the whole world forever.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SOPHIA touched me on the arm as the last hangers-on were dispersing, and drew me inside the library door.

"Louisa, will you see Colonel Berkley a minute?"

"Impossible. Has he been talking to you about me?"

"About the other night altogether. He has been apologizing again to me, and would apologize to you if you would consent."

"I don't see what apology he can make, Sophia?"

"Well, he insists upon it he was drunk."

"Nonsense!"

"I know it sounds nonsensical; but that's what he says, and I have really been obliged to promise I would prevail upon you to see him."

"You cannot, Sophia. No excuse he can offer will influence me."

"Perhaps it is just as well you should not be tempted. Berkley says he never knew a woman that could remain offended with him longer than he could gain speech with her."

"I will see him."

"You *will*? Do I understand you rightly?"

"I will, unless he has gone."

"No, he has not gone, although I did assure him I had no idea of gaining your consent. I'll tell him." And Sophia hurried away.

I repented my rashness almost immediately, but nothing could be done now to mend it. I opened every window in the library to admit the night air, sank into an arm-chair by the table, trembling and feverish, buried my face in my hands, and struggled to nerve myself to strength, though bitterly regretting that I had undertaken what I might not carry out. It was too late. Berkley had come. I glanced up as he entered, and detected the vestige of a smile on his face as he turned to close the door. My assent to the interview had reached him just as he was quitting the house, for he was fairly cloaked and took off his gloves as he entered.

That smile stung me into courage. I adopted an instant determination to cling to the one idea of resistance

throughout an interview to which I had so rashly consented. As I kept my eyes steadily averted, after the first glance I could judge nothing by Berkley's air, and was not a little surprised at the unsteadiness of his voice when he addressed me. No time was lost; he began, as soon as he crossed the threshold, to enlarge on his overpowering sense of his iniquities, and on his sufferings under my displeasure, to which it would be impossible to do full justice. It had been the first time in his life that he had been guilty of such rude and ungentlemanly conduct, would swear with all solemnity it should be the last, professed all penitence, and demanded pardon. He could only plead, in defence, that his companions, on the evening to which he alluded, were carried away by an ungovernable excitement, which had unfortunately extended itself to him.

I did not reply instantly. I was repelled by his manner, and disgusted. The words were uttered with growing confidence, with arrogance, with positive insolence. It was clear that he was prompted by a sense of duty, toward a person whom he had injured; still disliking that person beyond measure, and only anxious for absolution from a memory of which he had the grace to be ashamed. All my nervousness and agitation was gone. I lifted my head, and measured him with my eyes from head to foot.

"It is a poor defence," I said; "and poor as it is, it cannot serve you, because it is invalid. The ungovernable excitement to which you allude, if you choose to dignify a drunken frolic by that term did *not* extend itself to you. Your acts were willful and deliberate."

"You are severe;—you are just," he added after a moment. "I stand convicted of a subterfuge, in addition to my other enormities. I beg you will pronounce pardon before the catalogue grows any longer."

"You are quite ignorant," I replied, "what length the catalogue has attained already; there are offences for which I know you have not the least intention to atone."

"If I don't know, why will you not tell me?"

"I will. I allude to words you spoke against our common country."

Berkley's lip curled. "Oh, I can't apologize to the whole country to-night, Miss Renshawe. Let that slide. We can be friends, whether we belong to a common or a separate kingdom."

"We can not be friends," said I. "We could not have been friends, had you never offended me, Colonel Berkley. I could never have given you friendship, because,"—and the words came out a little tremulously, but full and emphatic—"you once imagined I had given you more."

"Whatever your sentiments may have been formerly," said Berkley, "I need no proof now that they have undergone alteration."

"Have you the unpardonable arrogance to pronounce on my sentiments?"

Berkley raised his dark eyes to mine: "Will you deny them?"

We stood there face to face; that question asked me direct; was ever known such insolence?

"Sir," and I measured my words, that they might not contain the denial which would neither serve me nor mislead him, "I have never entertained a favorable sentiment toward you, of which I am not heartily ashamed."

These words had a visible effect.

"You do not know," I proceeded, "how low you have fallen. You think one word from you should cover any offence committed against any one living. In that respect you are greatly mistaken."

"But I can give nothing but a word, Miss Renshawe. There's no possible way of restitution. I have told all the gentlemen that I intended to apologize to you, and for that matter, all the ladies. I am ready to own anything, confess anything, promise anything. I know I have behaved like a ruffian; like a devil; like a—a *coward*. Can't you forgive me now?"

I rose. It was time to close the interview.

"If I said yes, you would know I did not say it from my heart."

"If you have not intended to say yes, why did you allow me to see you?"

"That you might see how far I am from being angry. I think you need a lesson, Colonel Berkley. I regret that, given by me, it will possess so little bitterness. I consented to see you, that you might not be prevented from laying that lesson to heart, under the impression that I refuse all further acquaintance with you, in a passion. You see, I act deliberately."

"If we part unreconciled to-night, Miss Renshawe, we may regret it."

"I shall not," I answered. "I know you can avenge my hostilities. I am thrown among my enemies, and I am at your mercy, but you may do your worst."

"I have deserved that you should misjudge me," said he. "But have I fallen so low in your eyes, as *that*?" Before you finally refuse me pardon, Miss Renshawe, I have one question to ask you regarding your conduct: is it Christian?"

This argument I feared he would use, as it was the one, of all others, which left me without any valid reply. I was again growing tremulous, but clung desperately to my resolution.

"I do not refuse because of the enormity of the

offence. I beg you will desist from this useless dispute. I trust you are satisfied that I am less weak, that I am, if you please, more vindictive than you thought me. Colonel Berkley, you and I are strangers henceforward."

On looking up, I was struck to perceive that my auditor had become deadly pale ; but it was the pallor that I had seen on his face near the close of a hard contested game of chess ; quite sure, however, that his moves were done, it did not trouble me. I gathered up from the centre-table my fan and my gloves, and turned to leave the room. Before I had moved a step, Berkley came up, and taking my hands knelt by my side, exclaiming with a look and tone that metamorphosed him completely : "Miss Renshawe, for God's sake say you forgive me."

For one moment I was staggered—only into silence ; not consent. The door opened and Mrs. Lionel Hervey stood on the threshold.

"Madam," said I, as she turned away with a grave astonished face, "will you send Miss Hervey to me, if you please?"

She bowed and withdrew. Berkley, who had neither looked up nor moved, rang the changes on his undertoned appeal in vain. My message to Sophia had roused another sentiment. "It is unnecessary," he said ; "I will trouble you no more ; only for the last time, will you forgive me?"

"No."

Berkley rose instantly. He turned and took his hat from the table. I saw his face was all glowing with anger. Ah, he was a demon foiled !

"We are strangers," I murmured.

"Enemies," he said in a voice half stifled with passion.

"Strangers," I repeated. This correction passed un-

noticed. He had gone in a hurry, but he had really gone, and I had—triumphed.

Sophia was the first person I met on my way below.

“You look gay and defiant ; what have you done ?”

I told her that there had been a skirmish of souls, and I had conquered. I begged for her congratulations. Sophia shook her head.

“What, you blame me ? Did you not tell me that he boasted of the irresistible effect of his fascinations ?”

“But his boasts did not affect the merits of the case, Louisa. I’m afraid you were wrong.”

Wrong! when I had corrected his mistakes, rebuked his disloyalty, and finally silenced his self confidence? My own pride was gratified, my own mortification avenged.

After all, was there no better lesson that I might have taught? I spurned the suggestion. I had gained nothing—I had lost much. I would not acknowledge it. My heart was strangely hardened toward all the world.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SATURDAY morning a summons from below brought me down at an early hour. Sophia’s face was luminous.

“Any news ?” I inquired.

“News from Washington ; yes. My uncle has just told us Laud and Cassy were married on Wednesday morning last.”

Congratulations as heartfelt as though they had been interchanged on the floor of reception-rooms filled with wedding guests, passed between the members of my brother-in-law’s family and myself ; but the reflection

which lent solemnity to those congratulations, was that some painful consideration, connected with Captain Hervey's safety, had led to such a hasty wedding. Mrs. Lionel Hervey, quite subdued among the host of her relatives, had expressed her rejoicings in a soft, musical tone, and with a most enchanting smile, after which she flitted up the staircase, requesting me to join her as speedily as I could.

In the course of that morning I availed myself of the invitation. Mrs. Hervey's room was a large apartment, on the second story, overlooking the street, which was visible just beyond the lawn. A young negress, of Mr. Laud's household, was arranging baskets of flowers and green boughs on the shelves, and Mrs. Hervey herself sat by the open window, apparently less engaged with the work on her lap, than with what was going on without.

The subject of the hot day was done ample justice to. Mrs. Hervey told me that she had been down stairs to get cool, and couldn't ; up stairs to get cool and didn't ; down to the basement for ice, and there wasn't any. In the first place she had sent Venus for ice, but she didn't bring it.

Venus giggled, and informed missus dat dar wasn't none.

"Well, now that I've sent for it to the village," said Mrs. Hervey, "I want you to be on hand and see that it comes ; and don't stand talking to the ice-man an hour at the gate, as you did yesterday, till the ice all melted. I never saw anybody like you, Venus, for talking at gates."

Venus looked quite delighted. "Missus, you do beat all," she said. "Nebber goes to de gate ; must be it wus Tilly. Sorry missus hed to go down fur de ice. Sort she'd knowed when I didn't come up sta'rs dat dar wan't none."

“Well, go down now, and bring me the ice as soon as it comes.”

Venus lagged off. Mrs. Hervey called after her to tell Major Hervey, if he came, that she wished to see him.

“I don’t suppose I shall see him any sooner for that,” she remarked to me. “I had a great quarrel with him yesterday.”

“With your husband, Mrs. Hervey?”

“Yes; nothing unusual. He is so stubborn, sometimes, anybody would quarrel with him. We made it up before he went away; that is, I went down in the hot sun, all the way to the village, to see him, and he told me I was very silly to come down, for he was not angry. Most unsatisfactory person—nobody can ever tell whether he is angry or not.”

The subject of the conversation was just then seen coming into the house, and after a considerable time, during which Mrs. Hervey wondered not a little at his non-appearance, he ran up the stair-case and entered the room. Major Hervey looked exceedingly amiable; his aspect was, in every respect, thoroughly praiseworthy; his conduct ditto. After shaking hands with me, and expressing his happiness at the event which had connected our families, he took a meerschaum pipe from his pocket, filled it with tobacco, and sat down opposite us to smoke.

“Don’t bring your villainous pipes here, Lionel,” objected Mrs. Hervey.

“Miss Renshawe likes pipes,” replied Major Hervey; “she told me so the other evening, when we were traversing the beach at Honey Island, by moonlight.”

“That’s the way you do, eh?” remarked Mrs. Hervey. “When I am away it’s beaches, and moonlight, and young ladies. Well, if Miss Renshawe likes pipes, I don’t.

Please put that out, Hervey, and I'll hunt the house through for cigars for you."

Major Hervey extinguished the pipe, and took several cigars from the closet.

"I can remember the time," he remarked, "when you did not object so much to a pipe as you do now."

"Very likely ; but it was not *your* pipe," said Mrs. Hervey, dryly.

"No, it was not my pipe," said Major Hervey ; "I did not intimate that it was."

"How long will you be here this morning?" inquired his wife.

"Only till I finish these cigars. The Washington papers will be in this morning."

"Send them round to us if there are any details of the wedding, or remarks about the bridal dresses, though probably there will not be. It must have been a very quiet wedding, of course."

"I don't know what you mean by quiet ; probably no drums."

"Drums !" repeated Mrs. Hervey.

"I can tell you all about it," said Major Hervey, "as well as the papers. The bride wore a veil, and the bridegroom epaulets ; all the élite of Washington were present, of course. United States officers, numerous and distinguished, five or six bridesmaids, and all the aunts, uncles, and cousins, on both sides, except those that were in the Confederate army, and those that couldn't come. There it is all in a nutshell."

"What did the notice say, Lionel?" asked Mrs. Hervey.

"How desperate you are for particulars ! The notice said they were married on Wednesday, July 17th. Captain Laud Hervey, U. S. A., and Cassandra, second daughter of the late Robert Renshawe, of New York."

"Why didn't you bring us the paper?"

"I did not have it ; otherwise I should have brought it, that you might cut the notice out and paste it in your scrap-book. I have another item of news for you, not culled from the newspapers, though I presume it has figured among them."

"A wedding?"

"Yes ; another wedding—not very recent, some months ago."

"Who do you mean?"

"Mrs. Hunter."

"Hinda?"

"Yes."

"She found one fool," remarked Mrs. Hervey ; "I didn't suppose she could find another. Who was it on this occasion?"

"I will let you guess."

"I cannot think of any one but Ramsay Jones."

"He would not marry her," I exclaimed, "for he does not like her."

"Then he has been inconsistent," said Major Hervey.

"It is Jones, then, Lionel?"

"Yes ; Jones."

Mrs. Hervey resorted to her needle, which she plied for a few minutes in silence, while Major Hervey discussed with me the facilities for my return to Washington, which I was anxious to effect. It was arranged that I could easily proceed on the following Monday, and a few lucid directions were given. Major Hervey remarked that Colonel Berkley could afford me the most valuable assistance. I declined Colonel Berkley's aid on the spot, and Major Hervey consequently promised me all in his power.

"I wonder who will be married next?" said Mrs. Hervey.

"Aren't two weddings sufficient?" asked the major. "I can't say, my dear, who will next have his head in the noose. We have enough to do just now without thinking of matrimony. Perhaps it will be Berkley next. He intends to invite us to his wedding when it does take place."

"I'd rather go to his funeral," replied Mrs. Hervey.

Her husband laughed.

"A delightful frame of mind you are in, my dear," said he; "Miss Renshawe must be regaled by such society. My cigar is nearly done, and I must be off for the camp. Any message to send to General Beauregard?"

"Tell him to put Colonel Berkley in front, if there is a battle. Really, his funeral would be *such* a variety."

Hervey shook his head.

"Then you would not like a variety?"

"I would not have that variety," said he. "The funeral may be the rule by and by, not the exception."

"Oh, Hervey, you have been keeping up that mournful prophecy so long!"

"I, Mary? I am sure I have said nothing of the sort."

"I suppose you forget; but you are all the time saying what a bloody war it will be, and all that; and I am sure so far it has been only play, and will be over in three months. If you won't have Colonel Berkley shot we will have your funeral; I'm determined on some variety. I'll write to your general, and tell him to put you in front."

"It is often more dangerous in the rear," said Major Hervey. "You see, my dear, I don't admit any suggestion that may conduce to your entertainment."

Mrs. Hervey took her writing desk on her lap:

"You see, Lionel, General Beauregard does not know me; but if you tell him that my beauty is in inverse ratio to your ugliness, his gallantry will leave him no choice. My dear General Beauregard: by sending Major Hervey

with all the signals and white flags in front, during the next battle, or, if there are better cannons in the rear, by sending him *back*—in short, by killing him off as speedily as possible—you will lay under everlasting obligations, yours, etc.”

“White flags?” repeated Major Hervey, “and cannons in the rear? what do you mean?”

By the way, I must have a postscript—what’s Colonel Berkley’s regiment, Lionel?”

“The ——th North Carolina.”

“*Postscript.*—General Beauregard will more particularly oblige Mrs. Hervey, by placing the ——th regiment of North Carolina, and its colonel, in some very safe place. That request is couched in more formal terms for obvious reasons. Here, Lionel, be careful of it.”

Major Hervey took the note that she held out to him, glanced at the graceful hand-writing, then gave the paper a twist and threw it on the table.

“What! you won’t take it? how silly!”

“Do you think it silly?”

“Yes, you are always silly about my jests!”

“There is a sort of infection about your jests, my dear,” said Hervey, “something magnetic.”

“Very severe you are; but I am not to be daunted—you have not said yet what style of coffin you approve.”

Major Hervey made no reply. He took the note from the table, folded it, and put it in an envelope. Mrs. Hervey offered her pen; but he placed the note in his pocket undirected.

“Suppose you should forget whom it is for,” said Mrs. Hervey.

“I will not forget.”

“Why, Lionel, are you going? you have not half consumed that cigar. Well, I hope when you come to-morrow, you won’t be severe.”

Major Hervey bowed a good morning to me, kissed his wife, took his cap from the table, and moved to the door; he came back and kissed her again, walked into the hall, and went half-way down the stairs, then came back and repeated the caress a third time.

"What's the reason of all this parade?" she asked; "do you intend to desert to the North this afternoon?"

"I want you to remember," said he, "that you need never recall a word you have said to me this morning in sorrow. Do you understand me?"

"No, I don't understand; but I will try to obey. Good-bye."

"Good-bye." He left the room, and shortly after I saw his figure on the walk. At the gate he stopped and retained his station till his cigar was finished, with his face turned toward the casement, at which Mrs. Hervey was visible. She waved a handkerchief from the window; but there was no response. Neither hand, nor hat, nor tassel moved, and at last, turning away from his silent scrutiny, Major Hervey struck into the highway, and was soon out of sight.

"I cannot imagine what the matter is," remarked Mrs. Hervey, throwing the handkerchief she had been waving on the table. "I must ask him, when he comes to-morrow. I am afraid I made him angry with my nonsense. Don't you think he was angry? I am always sorry when it is too late, and never think at the time."

Venus clattered up stairs with the ice, a huge straw hat surmounting her black physiognomy, with a brim so enormous that it brushed the door on either side in passing.

"Dear me, Venus—where did you get that hat?"

"Changed hats wid de ice-man, missus."

"Ah, did you meet Major Hervey?"

"Yes, missus, an' met Cunnel Hunter."

"What did he say to you?"

"Don't like to tell," said Venus, simperingly.

"Nonsense—you must tell—what did he say?"

"Said if I trabbeled so fast all de oder niggers would git married fust, for de beaux couldn't ketch up. Law! missus, he grabbed a hull handful ob de ice—got scratches and cuts all ober his hands and face."

"What! Major Hervey?"

"Oh, no missus—tort you meant Cunnel Hunter. Mas'r Lionel nebber said nuffin, 'cept 'Venus, you ort to hev a bigger hat.'"

"He said nothing else?"

"Nuffin, missus."

"That will do,—you may go."

The rest of the day was lounged away in a quiet, dreamy state, as happily as a day could pass under such circumstances. Thoughts of Cassy and her husband, of my mother and sister, far away in a city filled with our country's implacable foes, my brother in the field, our vacant home, our scattered family—these might have been sufficient to depress a spirit far stronger than mine. It seemed a day given up to recollection. I could neither write, nor draw, nor sew. I could do nothing but gaze at the floating clouds, at the waving trees, listen to the song of the birds, and the happy laughter of the negroes below stairs, and resign myself to the memory of the last few months. As the sun went down, I watched it from the bench beneath the oak tree just before the door. It sank behind the brown hills of the west, in a haze of glory, through which the round red ball rose and fell until all was gone except the bright reflection on the sky. Recollections crowded thick and fast—I thought of the happy village and sea-washed coast at Renshawe, the whirl and bustle and excitement among the great mass of humanity at New York, the hill and wood-land, and

grand solitude at Blue Hills, the military camps and pleasant groves of White Chimneys. Forms and faces and scenes came vividly before my mental vision—my mother, my sister, the Ostranders, Mr. Shaker, Mrs. Judson, Tomlin—all—all past.

Night came down before I knew it. A call from the piazza was unheeded—a hand laid on my shoulder roused me to myself. I looked up and saw Mrs. Hervey, her face radiant with beauty and happiness.

“Come, my dear Miss Renshawe, don’t sit out here any longer ; tea waits in the dining-room, and my uncle has sent me to call you in.”

I rose, with a heart which the gay, light voice had cheered, and followed my companion to the house.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MANASSAS.

SOME faint streaks of light were visible in the eastern sky, on the morning of Sunday, July 21st, when I was awakened by Sophia from slumbers that had been light and insufficient.

“Is there any bad news?” I inquired, noticing the troubled expression that her features wore.

“There is news that the Northern army is advancing from Washington. Reports are so unreliable, that we hardly know what to believe as yet ; but at all events, we fear a battle is imminent. Mr. Laud and my brother have been out some time. They are in a terrible state of excitement, and the most painful part of it is, each in a different cause. My brother is sure that the rebels will run at the first sight of our flag, and Mr. Laud believes as

firmly the contrary. There are only two considerations that have weight with either : that there is a son and nephew in Beauregard's army, and another, it is more than probable, on the other side."

In spite of the forced calmness with which Sophia had spoken, I saw that this consideration was one which lent poignancy to her fears.

I dressed rapidly, and came below to the parlor. The family was all gathered on the piazza, seated on the steps and chairs, in anxious consideration of the news. The same state of affairs was visible on the opposite side of the street. The steps and hotels were filled at the windows and doors, secession flags floated triumphantly over the scene.

Mrs. Lionel Hervey was the person who said the least, and apparently thought the most, in the assembly. She stood in the hall-door, her lovely face turned toward the throng gathering at the corners, listening gravely to all the excited comments of the company, without remark, and without motion. At last, calling one of the negroes to her side, she charged him with a slight commission, and betaking herself to the shaded well-path, paced up and down alone, with the copy of a paper in her hand, which she thoughtfully consulted.

In the mean time the sun rolled on, the negroes chattered, the dogs barked on the lawn, the graceful white dress trailed up and down the well-path, the anxious voices sounded under the vines of the veranda. Mr. Laud had several times crossed the street to get the news, and the last report silenced whatever hope we had cherished that the whole alarm was groundless.

"They are on the Warrenton turnpike—Lincoln's men, I hear," said he.

"Where are the Confederate forces?" asked Mrs. Lionel Hervey.

"I cannot tell ; they have not moved. In the region of Bull's Run, I reckon. They are all ready, no doubt."

Mrs. Lionel Hervey re-entered the house. Immediately after there came a report jarring the very stones on which we stood.

"Cannon!" was our host's exclamation. "They have met!"

Several gentlemen rode by the paling with cheers. Mr. Laud called to them : "God speed the right!"

"Aren't you going out to see the battle?" they demanded. "Get your horse and follow us!" They rode on.

The suggestion was followed. Mr. Laud and his brother-in-law took the fleetest horses in the stables, and rode off toward the Junction.

It was a terrible day for the nation, and those first conscious of the struggle suffered not a little in anticipation of what was in store for the rest. That steady roar, undiminished, unabated, uninterrupted, rose over the hills and rolled through the valleys, till it seemed to reverberate in the very clouds of the horizon. There were incessant tokens from the field—men were passing through the street on hasty errands, riderless horses grazed along the way-side, startled away by the passers ; flying rumors were incessant and distracting. Success was reported, first on one side and then on the other ; but while that awful roar still jarred the windows, and the smoke still ascended, nothing could be decided yet. No doubt, that to-morrow the wires would tell the tale of our victory all over the North, and I thanked God devoutly in that anticipation. Distracted as I was, I had forgotten one of our company, and it was not till the afternoon that I inquired where was Mrs. Lionel Hervey.

She was on the housetop, whither I hastened to join her. The hot sun was beating down on the roof through the waving boughs of the surrounding trees. Mrs. Her-

vey knelt by the balusters of the roof, holding a telescope to her eyes, which was directed steadily toward the quarter of the conflict. I came up and asked if she could see anything that was going on.

"Nothing distinctly," she answered, "except a horse, now and then, without a rider. You may take the glass; my eyes ache with looking through it. It is now some hours since I came here."

I took the telescope, and, kneeling beside her, strove to distinguish some figure or movement on the distant field, but all swam before my eyes. I saw nothing but the trees, and the dust on the distant turnpike.

"That's not the Warrenton road," said Mrs. Hervey. "that runs on the other side of Manassas. I wish this battle were over. The certainty that something was decided, would be a blessed one."

Mr. Laud and Mr. Hervey returned about three in the afternoon. They had gathered nothing beyond the fact that no result of importance had yet taken place. Neither party had gained any apparent advantage.

Night came at last. The guns had been silent half an hour or more, when, to the anxious crowd on the piazza, Mr. Laud rushed back from his latest sally beyond the gate.

"Mary! Mary!" he shouted. "Hurrah! Dixie forever! We have won the day!"

A gleam of triumph shot across Mrs. Hervey's features. "God be thanked!" she ejaculated.

"My dear sir," cried Sophia, aghast, "there must be some mistake. It's quite impossible that the North has lost this battle."

"I know," rejoined Mr. Laud, "that you think it impossible for the North to fail in anything; nevertheless, the Confederate flags are going up all over the village, and

a soldier, just in from the Junction, informs me that the Northern army is in full retreat for Washington. The Fire Zouaves are cut in pieces."

Up to that moment not a single doubt of the issue had risen in my mind. Like Sophia, I had thought that defeat for us was impossible. Consternation shone in the faces of all the company except the two by whom the result was hailed with rejoicing.

"Let me tell the servants," said Mr. Laud, little fancying our unsympathizing faces. "They shall have a jubilee to-morrow," and he hastened from the room.

The truth of the tidings was realized at last. Mr. Hervey paced the room in anguish that was visibly portrayed on his features. His wife and daughters wept bitterly. A feeling too deep for tears had seized upon my heart. I had looked upon the rebels with the leniency, the sympathy, even, that may be granted safely to a vanquished foe. For these successful traitors I had no sentiment but indignation.

"You may abate your anxiety," said Mr. Laud, on his return to the piazza. "I understand that Laud has not left Washington, and as Beauregard's force was not engaged, Lionel, of course, was out of danger."

There was nothing in this to reassure me. All the evening chance reports were carried back and forth. It was late before Mr. Laud shut up the house for the night.

CHAPTER XXX.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

NONE of us thought of sleep that night, beyond the slight snatches of rest which wearied nature absolutely demanded. The village was filled with pass-

ing squads of soldiers, and alive with excitement all night. Reports of an alarming nature agitated the household. Mr. Laud had ascertained that the Federal force, led by General McDowell, had engaged Beauregard's army; that Johnston had reinforced Beauregard with twenty thousand men; but whether Johnston's corps had been in the battle or not he had not discovered.

The intelligence that partially relieved my mind brought bitter uncertainty to the others. That Major Hervey had been in the battle was certain, and it was by no means uncertain that Captain Hervey was not on the other side. Mr. Hervey, evidently for the sake of concealing his own anxiety, attempted to alleviate the fears of the others by assurances that reports of slaughter were always exaggerated; that General Scott had said it required a waste of five hundred pounds of lead to kill one man in a battle, etc.

It was a relief when morning came at last. Our weary, sad, and haggard party was gathered in the little front parlor of the house—the fresh breeze blowing in from the street under the heavy green vines of the piazza. Hot faces and fevered temples were turned towards the casement. Outside all was cool and refreshing to the sight—the stones of the curb—the overhanging branches—the grasses, wet with the dews of the night—the mists dispersing in the morning sun.

The anxiety about Major Hervey was but ill-concealed, even by those who strove most manfully to overcome feelings for the sake of the rest. Mrs. Lionel Hervey wandered through the house and about the grounds, her white dress floating down by the gateway, and her anxious face soon after in the hall, while to every one she met was put the question, "Has Lionel come?" Her mother-in-law took her hand at last, and drew her gently by her side on the sofa, saying to her, reassuringly, that

Lionel would not be able to come himself, and until some intelligence reached them of his safety, suspense must be borne with patience. Mr. Laud and Mr. Hervey had gone again and again to the village to learn every passing rumor, and returned unsatisfied, and at last I judged from their quiet station, taken at the hall-door, that they had decided to remain at home, and wait developments there.

Among the military groups passing through the street, a company of officers rode up to the gate. Mr. Laud walked out on the piazza. There was the customary greeting of "Dixie forever," an inquiry about Major Hervey still unsatisfied, then I heard Mr. Laud say, "A glorious day for us, gentlemen."

One of the officers observed, "Yes, it was a finer affair than Centreville."

"Are you not coming in?" called Mr. Laud. "Come in, gentlemen, and take a glass of wine with me on this occasion."

"No, sir, thank you; we are only waiting for Colonel Berkley," rejoined one of the officers, whom I recognized as belonging to the Colonel's staff. "Is he not here?"

"I believe not. I will see," said Mr. Laud. He went back into the drawing-rooms, where several gentlemen and ladies from the neighborhood were gathered. At the same moment I saw an officer galloping up the highway; a horse reined at the fence; a bridle thrown to one of the officers. The rider dismounted, came over the gate and up the pathway. It was Colonel Berkley; but so soiled and dusty as scarcely to be recognized. As everybody pressed forward to meet him, he entered through the open doors. When he saw who was there, his countenance grew rather dark, and by the paling cheeks of those around me, I knew that his change of features carried warning of evil to other souls than mine.

"Mr. Laud, may I see you a moment?" he said, turning to draw back again to the veranda.

"Stop, Colonel Berkley," said Mr. Hervey, who was violently trembling. "Do you know anything about my son?"

"Yes, sir; we have the returns this morning," Berkley rejoined, "and I am sorry to be made the bearer of very bad news."

"For God's sake, speak! Let us know the worst!" cried the unhappy mother, while Mrs. Lionel Hervey, with a look and manner of the most intense agitation, came up to Berkley, and laying her hand on his arm, exclaimed, "I conjure you, as you have a soul to be saved, do not trifle with us—it is such an awful moment for us all, remember! Where is my husband? Is he a prisoner, wounded? Can I see him? Answer me; answer me!" and she shook him by the arm. "Perhaps he is at the point of death!"

"Madam," said Berkley, "your husband——" but the look in that eye even he could not meet, and he turned to Mr. Hervey. "Sir, your son is—dead."

Mr. Hervey covered his face with his hands, and groaned. I saw the bereaved mother surrounded, and led from the room, followed by her weeping daughters, and those whose commiseration and sympathy was testified on every side. Mrs. Lionel Hervey, with one single heart-rending scream, faltered and swooned at the feet of the messenger. I saw Berkley lift her from the floor. A crowd came about them—the windows were thrown wide open—cold water was brought, and at the first sign of returning consciousness, she was carried from the room. All had gone but me. Mr. Laud had followed Colonel Berkley to the piazza to put a few questions relative to the disposal of the body.

The whole sad scene was soon over. I saw the rebel

officer shaking hands with the bereaved uncle, after which he joined the company lighting their cigars at the gate. They all rode off directly. Mr. Laud dispersed the servants by some orders, among which I distinguished a charge to close the shutters, and hang the doors with crape. When he turned to re-cross the threshold, I judged by the tears that filled his eyes that the "successful arms" he had glorified had won for him a dear-bought victory.

RENSHAWE.

III.

PORT EVELYN.

Aye, now I am in Arden; the more fool I: when I was at home I was in a better place, but travelers must be content.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

CHAPTER XXXI.

APASS furnished by Captain Davis, who had been very energetic in my behalf, enabled me to reach Washington that night.

I was so ill that I made my way to my aunt's house with difficulty, and soon sank entirely under a fever, which prostrated me for nearly two months. I was long in recovering my former vigor, and my convalescence was attended with wearisome relapses.

Laud was at the North, on recruiting service, and Cassy followed him as soon as my health was fairly re-established. I had written twice to Mr. Shaker, but had received no answer, and determined to make a flying visit to Blue Hills, to ascertain for myself the cause of this silence. On the morning after Cassy's departure, I left

the city by an early train, but missed a connection, and did not arrive at Rocky Cross, in consequence, till noon. At Rocky Cross I hired a little carriage, and drove solitarily down to Blue Hills by the road with which I was already so familiar. There was the little cottage at which I had first seen Edith Launey, and as I passed the picket fence, confining the shrubbery, I almost expected the appearance of that lovely demoiselle. There were the same rocks and hills that I had noted with such a sinking heart, during my midnight ride on Sunset ; there was the cart-path running through the woods, within whose gloomy shades I had left Tomlin on that memorable night, and next came the cottage where I had first encountered the zouaves, and where the wounded rebels had been taken by their fellows. The cottage seemed singularly deserted ; no sign of life about it ; but I could not tarry to investigate, and drove on rapidly to Blue Hills. I came first, by a back road, to the village, where I left my horse, and walked up toward Mr. Shaker's dwelling. In the village, everything appeared to be going on quietly, and quite as much as though the country was undergoing no convulsion, as in any Northern town. The old house at last loomed up before me. I saw the fences, the dog kennel, the old cistern pole, the dilapidated out-buildings, Singular Twist's straw hat hanging on the shed. I walked up the path, and took my way around the house to the back door. The dog crawled feebly to the edge of the kennel, and whimpered faintly as I passed. When I came to the door of the back sitting-room, the only sign of life I could distinguish was a woman's voice, singing a song with a low refrain. She sat with her profile toward me at the window, singing and sewing. I recognized the hard features, the massive knot of brown hair, the steady jerk of the hand that held the needle, the skein of coarse thread hanging about the

sunburnt neck, and the low, full voice of the songstress. She had not noticed me.

"Mrs. Judson!" said I.

The woman looked up; there was an exclamation of astonishment; then the work fell to the floor; she caught me in her arms, gave me a hearty embrace, and burst into tears.

"Oh, Miss Renshawe, you can't think how overj'ied I am to see you agin', arter so long a time, and this very arternoon, while I wus settin' here alone, I wus a-thinkin' about you, an' all the rest on 'em, an' the times we used to have here. Good laws! whar did you come from? I thort you must be dead, or forgotten all about us!"

"Forgotten you? no! but where are Mr. Shaker and Miss Edith?"

"Bless you! ben gone this good while; gone for all winter. Miss Edith warn't well, an' they've gone to the West Injies to stay all winter. Hevn't heerd from 'em sense they left. Mr. Shaker, you know, won't travel in a locomotive, and wharever he goes it takes him a month to git thar. They've gone in a steamboat, I believe. Sing'lar Twist's gone a-visitin' his relations. Went to stay three days, and ben gone now seven weeks; but that ain't nawthin' strange. S'pect they'll be a good deal gladder to see him go than they wus to see him come."

"Then you are all alone here, now?"

"All but Sally Bunn. She's just gone up the mountain to git a few yeast cakes; time she wus back. Sally's growed a good deal in a year, Miss Renshawe—quite tall an' lively now, and wars white stockens all the time. She's a-goin' to be married! Guess who it's to."

"Not Singular?" I exclaimed.

"Laws, Miss Renshawe, Sally's too spry to look twice at Sing'lar. No; it's the zwarve, Elisha. They're a-goen to be married, that is, providen' he doesn't get drunk in

a year. I asked her how she wus to know, an' she said he'd tell her. Never see sech a poor bewitched critter in my life as that gal is. Mebbe he ken tell her as straight as he walks ; I never seed him when he warn't half tipsy."

"And Tomlin?"

"Hain't sot eyes on him since the day we seed him out o' that winder, a-walkin' down to the village. Miss Edith, she writ two or three times, but never got no answer ; an' I've wondered an' worried about him more than a little. Shed think he wus dead, but thar's ben too many folks here inquiren' about him."

It was too late to return that night, consequently I remained at Blue Hills, and returned to Washington during the following day.

That same evening Alice came. This fair demoiselle, of course, was direct from Dixie, going back in a day or two, and she brought information from Charleston that filled me with dismay. My mother was very ill in that city, was with Helen at my uncle's house, and the physicians had pronounced her recovery doubtful ; still she might live for several weeks. Alice had not seen her, but had learned this report from a quarter that left no doubt of its authenticity.

I immediately telegraphed to Cassy, and as soon as that duty was off my hands, sought Alice in the dining-room, to ask what she thought of my joining my mother as soon as possible.

"Are you asking advice, or announcing a determination?"

"Announcing a determination, and inquiring about the facilities."

"As to the facilities, you will get there more easily than you will get back again."

"That does not daunt me, Alice ; will you give me explicit directions how to proceed?"

"You may accompany me if you will ; I leave on Monday morning."

"Two whole days ! my heart responds to all but the delay."

"You will probably," said my cousin, "save yourself more than that delay in the end."

This was quite reasonable, and the arrangement was made.

On Saturday, with my thoughts full of my poor mother and Helen, I hurried about as fast as my melancholy and disordered mind would permit, to get together the proper articles for my journey. I had first concluded some purchases at a large dry-goods store, and seated myself to rest for a short time on a stool by the counter, when I was suddenly accosted in a familiar voice, and on looking up discovered that I had been addressed by my old acquaintance, Hinda Hunter, or, as matters stood now, Mrs. Ramsay Jones. The face of one whom I had known amid scenes so different, brought up a kindlier feeling than might otherwise have arisen toward one whose character I held in such contempt. I immediately offered my congratulations on her marriage, not having seen her at all since her widowhood.

Hinda repressed my congratulations, and, with systematic precision, she began at the beginning, and proceeded to tell me "all about it." Those wretches, Godolphin and Judith, had circumvented her by destroying her first husband's will, before she reached home on the night of the play at the Bourdlèmes'. She said she had the misery of seeing them appropriate nearly all the estate. She had a considerable portion of the personal property, after what was paid the lawyers, and the law gave her a life interest in one-third of Mr. Hunter's estates. These estates lay in the State of Maine.

Surprised to note a certain tremor in Hinda's voice,

and to see tears in her eyes, I proposed that we should leave the store, and she led the way directly to the park, where we sat down on a bench, in the most secluded quarter, to continue the discourse. It was an hour of the day when very few were passing, and no interruption occurred to the narrative. Hinda went on to relate, that after in part recovering from the chagrin that had been caused her by this division of the property, she next learned that there had been a terrible fracas at Baltimore, between Mr. Jones and her nephew-in-law, Godolphin Hunter, now a colonel in the rebel army, in which quarrel that officious George Berkley was, of course, mixed up.

The papers publishing the transaction stated that the quarrel was about Mrs. Hunter, and Hinda with the rest of the world supposed it to be the wife of her nephew-in-law that was meant, but to her great horror, a letter from Jones apprised her that it was all for her sake the quarrel had arisen, and that he was ill in the hospital, (all for her sake,) and without a penny he could call his own.

This version of the quarrel was a false one, but Hinda did not suspect it. Alarmed by Jones's touching letter, and its tremulous chirography, she immediately left town, scarcely stopping to pack a carpet-bag, arrived in Baltimore, and went directly to the hospital. She found Jones convalescing,—sitting in a lower room, one hand in a sling, the other playing cards—three other youths at the card-table. He had a long talk with Hinda, represented his mournful case in a touching manner, and offered himself with his broken fortunes to the widow of the millionaire. Hinda accepted the proposal, married Jones the next day, and brought him away from the hospital to take care of him till his shattered health was restored.

“And I’ve done nothing but take care of him ever since, Louisa! and he has done nothing but spend my

money and abuse me to people. I warn you, my dear Louisa, never marry! at least don't marry for love. Men are all alike—all obstinate and selfish. No human being could have doubted that Jones was in love with me once. He would have married me when I was a penniless girl, but I really don't know him now. All the money I had from poor old Jonas, has been spent by that idle and extravagant fool. This year's income from my real-estate is all gone, and he wants me to sell out my life-interest in it. He says I can do it, but I'm determined I won't do that if he kills me, and I'm afraid he will kill me yet."

Here Mrs. Jones sobbed almost aloud. I felt sincerely sorry for her, but as far as consolation went, was dumb.

"If you would but come home with me, and remain all night," she pleaded—"stay a few days with me, it would be such a kindness; Jones behaves infinitely better before people."

I began to make some suggestion embracing the reformation of the individual alluded to, but Mrs. Jones cut me short.

"Reformation indeed! what can you hope from a man who has run through my capital in six months? If Jones had the wealth of Cræsus to-day, he'd be penniless in a year." Another hour was here devoted to the relation of that gentleman's misdemeanors. He was very intemperate; never was sober a whole day together; he had squandered large sums of money at the gambling-table and the race-course; associated with the lowest class of men and women; and repaid his wife's kindness to him by the basest ingratitude, calumniating her everywhere he went.

"Why do you not tell him that you will leave him, if he continues to behave so?" I inquired, my conscience smiting me the same instant for giving such improper counsel to a wife.

“Oh, that would not alarm him in the least. Indeed, he has the advantage of me there; he has been threatening to go every day for the last month. All that keeps him here now is the hope of my selling my interest in those Maine estates. I know that as soon as he sees that sale consummated, I shall never behold him again. I am very weak and silly to wish to see him at all, he says such inhuman things; accused me yesterday of having married Mr. Hunter for his money; but as I could retort by saying that he married Mr. Hunter’s widow with the same object, he did not recur to that subject again.”

Finding that Mr. Jones was too hopeless a character to bear much discussion, I endeavored to lead my companion’s thoughts into another channel, and in allusion to her invitation to spend a few days with her, I began to offer my excuses. I told her of my mother’s illness at Charleston, my intention of going South on the day following, and the necessity I was under of making my final preparations on that evening. During these explanations I was struck by the look of interest that appeared on Mrs. Jones’s face, and then by the meditative air and mechanical attention which she bestowed on my concluding excuses.

“I don’t know,” she said at last, “whether to say it is owing to the fact that I never could exist without a confidante, or to my conviction that you are providentially thrown in my way to-day, that I propose to tell you a very important secret. I must ask a few questions first, however.”

As I had never known Hinda to be without “a secret,” I experienced very little curiosity, and answered these questions without hesitation.

“In the first place, how do you suppose I am living now, without any money, and such a husband as Jones to support?”

"I was at a loss to surmise," said I; "but I did not like to ask you such a question."

"You were very generous," said Mrs. Jones, with a sigh. "I cannot work, and you may judge by my dress that I have nothing to sell. Jones carried everything to the Jews—even to the last present that poor old Mr. Hunter gave me. But my dear—now for my second question. "How are your politics?"

"My politics!" I echoed in amazement.

"Yes, my dear; you know it is a sort of fashion now to be disunion, or 'secesh,' as the term goes—at least it is so in many circles."

"I do not belong to such circles, thank God."

"Spoken like yourself; but perhaps you take no interest at all in the question?"

"I take the most vital interest in it," I replied. "Ever since the late battle, my heart has never ceased to throb with painful anxiety for the success of our arms, and the supremacy of our government."

This again seemed to be spoken like myself, though Mrs. Hunter did not say so. She glanced around with an apprehensive air, and asked whether I thought a private soldier and nurse, who were standing by a baby's carriage at the gate, and engaged in profound discourse, were near enough to hear the communications. Inasmuch as the baby was screaming with the full power of a pair of stout little lungs, I replied in the negative.

In a lowered tone, and with a very confidential air, Hinda went on to say that she had received latterly quite a little sum of money for the performance of a service to the government of the United States. Some information that had been highly necessary, it had been in her power to afford—in attestation of this, she produced a roll of bills in a miserable, worn pocket-book; but inasmuch as these services were not unaccompanied by danger, more-

over as it was inevitable that Jones should miss her, if she attempted a second repetition, she was willing to let me take her place. As I was on the eve of departure for the South, it would be directly in my way to perform this service. Hinda owned that she had not succeeded remarkably well—she was no hand at sketching intrenchments, but she recollected my talent for drawing—in fact everything pointed me out for the work. I could bring my information to her, and she would allow me a per cent. on the profits.

I listened throughout without the slightest idea of entertaining the proposition. Certain arguments in favor of my mission, arose lazily in my mind; I recollected Tomlin's remarks on the duties of a spy; it was a character which in Cooper's hands was that of a hero; an ill-fated British officer had coupled the name with that of martyr among his own countryman, and was regarded with scarcely less esteem by ours. But these passing tributes to Harvey Birch and Major André, were the only mental wanderings I indulged.

"You are very kind in making me the offer," said I; "but I am quite unable to accept it. In the first place, I am filled with anxieties about my mother, and shall go as direct to Charleston as possible. Intrenchments and fortifications are the last objects which I shall seek, and more than this, I do not feel that a woman ought to take any active part in this war, other than to alleviate to the extent of her power the misery it will cause. If I thought otherwise, I have not the nerve for such an errand as this. Convinced as I am that a citizen of the United States has a perfect right to travel to any part of the country, it is a right which I am now obliged to regard as a favor."

It is doubtful whether Mrs. Jones paid attention enough to my arguments to preserve their connection ;

and after some inquiries about the time and mode of my departure, she bade me farewell. I watched her retreating form, noted her weary gait, recalled the look of care that sat so ill on her pretty, girlish features, and searched my heart for all the commiseration that it would bestow. The knowledge that all her miseries were brought upon her by her own folly, checked my sympathy from going to undue lengths.

Sunday, Alice was out again all day on some business of which I was willing to remain as ignorant as possible.

Monday morning the carriage came for my cousin and me at early dawn. Just as we were quitting the house, there was a ring at the door, and the familiar vision of Mrs. Jones appeared in the hall. She exclaimed at her good fortune in being just in time, and as Alice was evidently in haste, Hinda hurriedly whispered: "From the war-office!—be careful and cautious!" thrust a paper in my pocket and bade me a hasty adieu.

Of course I inspected the document before we were fairly out of Washington. It said that Miss Louisa Renshawe, in undertaking the service of a spy, was requested to follow out instructions "herein given," and would be entitled to such and such emoluments. These instructions were printed. I ran over it all with much curiosity.

There was a scrap of a note inclosed by the volatile Mrs. Jones; remarking that in procuring this office for her "dear Louisa," she would herself be content with a small percentage on the profits. Before I had fairly rid my mind of Mrs. Jones and her characteristic offers, the carriage stopped, and Alice dismissed the driver and led the way into a wayside tavern, where quite a company was assembled in the saloon. Alice walked around shaking hands with the several females composing it, and as I was not introduced, a ceremony with which I was quite

ready to dispense, I took my seat in a retired quarter.

"Where's Ramorny?" Alice demanded.

Ramorny had been there and was expected back every minute. I knew him on his entrance, as the former landlord of the Seven Horns; noticed that his eye rested steadfastly on me a few seconds, but there was no sign of recognition. We walked down a narrow pathway, admitting only two abreast, some distance in the rear of the hotel. Ramorny came up on the other side of Alice, who was walking with me, and asked for "the pass."

Alice presented a paper. "There it is; read it."

"Read it!" echoed Ramorny. "Pass the aunt and two cousins of J. J. Butler! Is this all the pass you have? How many of us are going through?"

"All of us."

Ramorny glanced back at the following line, muttering "two—four—six—ten women! Why, Miss Ludlow—not all going through on this pass? Who holds it?"

"I—I'm J. J. Butler's aunt, and you and Miss Renshawe are my two cousins. Louisa, take this gentleman's arm and go ahead."

I obeyed. My companion did not speak till we reached the first gates, except to wonder how Miss Ludlow was going to manage it. The barges lay close against the banks of the river, flags and streamers decorating all the tents stretched along the sidewalks. Ramorny handed the pass to a tobacco-chewing official who sat by the gateway.

"What ship ye goen aboard on?" he demanded.

"The Ossawattomie," rejoined Ramorny.

"Goen on the Swattomy? don't know as she's in the river. Say, Ben, is the Swattomy in the river?"

"Clus by." Ramorny drew back, and the ladies filed through.

"Hold on!" exclaimed the soldier, suddenly. "Be all your names on the paper?"

"Certainly," said Ramorny, pulling it away. "Can't you read?"

The officer came up and took the pass. "Oh, Jerusalem! what's all this? This all the pass? Aunt and two cousins of J. J. Butler. Where's the aunt?"

Alice, turning with a most winning air, announced the relationships severally. She was the aunt, this lady was niece, this one cousin, that one uncle's wife's sister, and so on, till the whole bevy had walked through. The officer stood looking first at the pass and then at the ladies, with the audible declaration, that it was the "longest aunt and two cousins" he ever had seen in his life; but at all events we were soon in the barge and half-way across the river. I could not help expressing to Alice my high admiration of the manner in which people managed to cross the lines.

"We're not across yet," rejoined my cousin, and I repressed my raptures till the transit should be surely effected. We were stopped at another wharf, where a change of boat became necessary, and another paper was presented, with orders to pass the same, aunt and two cousins of J. J. Butler, on board the Ossawattomie. Ramorny had been busy at the paper with a lead pencil, and the official who took it, looked puzzled at the chirography.

"Aunt and twenty cousins, eh? Don't see but ten cousins sir, if you're the aunt. Whar's the other ten?"

Ramorny said the other ten were coming in a day or two. The soldier seemed worried to think that they could not all go through at once, but finally yielded to let our divided party pass.

The Ossawattomie was a little black tug-boat, by means of which we were speedily set on the opposite shore.

My cousin and I separated from the rest of the party,

and proceeded together to a village not far from the shore. I had overtaxed my strength, however, fairly gave way, and was forced to detain Alice for several days before we proceeded. She would not consent to go on till my strength was fairly restored.

It was fully one week after our departure from Washington, that my cousin and I renewed our journey. We were supplied each with a small black satchel, which Alice thought would answer all our necessities, fastened by straps across the shoulder.

"In case we should be separated, Louisa," she remarked at last, "it will be well for you to have a few directions, which I will endeavor to make as plain as possible. In the first place, on reaching the Southern pickets, the sentinel will challenge you, and say, 'Who goes there?'"

"I am to say 'A friend,' I suppose."

"You are to say, 'A friend without the countersign.' You will then be ordered to await the approach of the officer of the guard, who may come within an hour, perhaps within a minute. When he comes, ask to see the colonel."

"What colonel?"

"Any colonel. When you see him, mention my name, say you are my cousin, traveling with me, and wish to see me. Then you will have no further trouble."

"Will the colonel put implicit faith in my statements?"

"He will probably detain you until I come. I shall inquire after you, of course, and when I rejoin you, I will put you *en route* for Charleston. But I trust we may not be separated."

This conversation had taken place in a light carriage, which Alice had hired to convey us to the next station. As she was senior partner in the enterprise, I had not asked a single question, but suffered her to lead the way whither she would.

Just as this short dialogue had come to an end, I perceived, at the ascent of an acclivity, that left the road open for a quarter of a mile, a party of men at full advance up the highway.

Alice looked around, as though with the instinctive thought of concealment, but such a measure was impracticable, and she drove on deliberately till we came up with the party on the open highway.

We were immediately called upon to stop. The party was composed of a company of soldiers, evidently raw enough yet at their business; but I could not have decided to which of the contending armies they belonged, were it not for a fact that put the matter past conjecture. Captain Walby—yes, the honorable Horace Edward Livingstone himself—was among them, bound, and plainly under guard as a prisoner.

Alice drew rein. Two of the party jumped off their horses, one took ours by the bit, the other accosted us. It was plain, from the boisterous actions and appearance of the party, that they had been on what is termed a spree.

‘Alight, if you please, ladies,’ said that one of the party, who, being in shoulder straps, had the principal mission to address us. I obeyed the command, for it was nothing else, but Alice, apparently unmindful of these instructions, retained her seat.

“We’ll examine this parcel,” exclaimed the master of ceremonies, taking my bag from my hands and turning it inside out for the benefit of the spectators. The first things that appeared, were a large purse and a folded paper. The officer threw the purse over his left arm and opened the document. Had he been quite sober I should have had less to fear from this inspection.

“A spy!” he exclaimed, in the loudest key of his voice, thinking probably, if he thought at all, that my compan-

ion was in the secret, and that his prisoner was never to escape from custody.

"A spy!" was repeated in various tones.

"What's this other lady—she in the same category?"

"I certainly was not aware," said Alice, who was deadly pale, "that there was a spy in my company."

At this juncture, an officer, whose face at the first I dimly recognized, suddenly stepped forward. "This is de young lady I saw at de Blue Hills. Miss a—Shaker. When Captain Good had dis company, dis lady she did help us out of Colonel Hunter de rebel offisare. I am Lieutenant Gallorda, Mese Shaker."

These words brought about a recognition. Gallorda it was; but so altered by a profuse growth of beard, that I scarcely knew him. If I was thus enlightened, another gleam had dawned on Captain Walby's soul.

His eyes were directed against my physiognomy with an expression more unpleasant than had ever visited it from that source before.

"That's it eh?" exclaimed the captain. "Shaker—this name of Renshawe is assumed of course. Well, madam, being one of our spies, I'm sorry I've detained you. Here you are, your calling sacred, your credentials clear. Take your paper and your purse"——

A sharp cut from Alice's whip, set off her horse at a bound. The hold on the bit had relaxed as soon as my supposed character was proclaimed. The soldiers stood staring after her, but not one attempted pursuit, which was evidently useless, as the horse was unusually fleet, and the next hill soon hid my fair cousin from sight.

As I before remarked, Captain Walby's eyes had recurred to my face very frequently, animated first by recognition, then by an expression betokening how little he thought of me and my mission; and his chagrin was in no wise rendered less, when he was ordered to dismount,

and his horse tendered me to facilitate my passage to Dixie. It was the meekest-looking nag in the company, and I hesitated not to accept him. I was now only anxious to ride on after Alice and explain that I was not a spy, and this course I attempted, when once released from my captors, whose cheers sounded on the air behind me long after they were out of sight. To find Alice, however, was not so easy a matter, and I was obliged to recall her directions and assail the picket-guard alone.

I was in no wise disappointed. On my interview with the colonel, who fortunately was nobody I knew, I found Alice's name as potent as she had prophesied. I inquired the names of the nearest villages, and on finding White Chimneys within a few miles, lost no time in hastening thither, to gain further aid and direction, and was at Mrs. Hervey's house by nightfall.

CHAPTER XXXII.

I DID not stay with the Herveys longer than one night; the next morning I departed in style.

I had left one trunk there, which, in the hurry of my return to Washington, I had been unable to convey across the lines. This trunk was safely deposited on the baggage-car, myself inside the train after an affectionate farewell taken of the Herveys at the White Chimney depot, and by nightfall I had reached the world-renowned city of Richmond.

One misfortune had befallen me of quite a serious nature under the circumstances. My pocket-book had been abstracted by some light-fingered lady or gentleman, which I could not tell, as several persons had occupied the seat next to me. This circumstance was all the

more provoking as I had always boasted that nothing could be stolen from me without my knowledge, that I had no fear of pick-pockets, and was always disposed to hold every one in contempt who could not take the same care of such property. But here in broad daylight, and I wide awake, some one had actually made off with mine, and my boasts were done.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon; I was beginning to realize the unpleasantness of my predicament, from which I saw no way of escape, and a sudden shower coming up drove me for shelter to a fruit and grocery store on the corner of the street. I waited there for half an hour, and when the rain had ceased lingered to look at the drying sidewalks, revolving some questions that I meant to put to some 'respectable party. In the middle of these ruminations one among the group of negro women looking over the fruits displayed in the baskets outside the door, glanced up to speak to the store-keeper, and had just got as far as "Massa, how much are dese——" when she caught my eye. She looked irresolute, turned away, looked again at me. It was undoubtedly she who had officiated as house-keeper in the Seven Horns tavern at the time I had visited it. The recognition was mutual.

"Cinderella!" I exclaimed.

"Why, missus," she ejaculated, letting fall the little basket on her arm in joy at the meeting. Then followed quite a jubilee, in which I bore an equal part to say the least, for I was overjoyed at the appearance of a friendly face in my present extremity.

"I jest stepped out to do my marketing," said Cinderella, "which isn't expensive to-night as my massa isn't in to tea, an' I've nothin' much to pervide."

I waited till the marketing was done, and Cinderella's basket fairly laden.

"You may walk a little way with me," said I, considering that her time was quite at her own disposal. Cinderella trudged along, all smiles immediately, and I took my way toward what seemed to be the most frequented quarter of the city.

"You spoke of your master," said I, "Mr. Ramorny is certainly not in Washington?"

"No missus, I don't see Massa Ramorny wery often now. I'se a-libin' now wid an ole massa ob mine—Mr. Skarfellow. He's a wery nice man indeed, an' I'se a heap sight better off dan I was a-tuggin' an' tilin' up at dem ar ole Seven Horns."

We had gone on with the Seven Horns under discussion for four or five blocks, when I perceived a fire just ahead, and the crowd, the usual consequence, was in this case dense. I turned off at right angles, Cinderella accompanying, and after proceeding about three blocks, perceived a regiment of newly-arrived troops coming up the street so that on reaching the corner it was impracticable to cross. I turned off, again at right angles, and after going about three blocks more found that we were in the midst of such a rabble running along with the regiment that I turned off at right angles again. By this time I had described quite a parallelogram, and was back again in the vicinity of the fire. Matters here had become more complicated. Several carts had been stopped, and were trying to go down a side street, where they were all jammed up. A mass of people had come to a stand-still, and a herd of cattle which were threading their way under the care of the drover, made confusion worse confounded. After being thrown against Cinderella's basket, the first time by a cow, the second by the pole of a carriage, after having been almost knocked down once by a man, and twice by a fire-engine, I took refuge with Cinderella upon the steps of a house: and

stood there regarding the fate of my hat undergoing demolition in the middle of the street, and the fire, cattle, carriages and so forth with equal composure, when Cinderella recalled me to my present dilemma by asking "Weder missus still tought she had better keep on in dis direction?"

"What direction is it?" I asked.

"Puty near de docks jest now," said Cinderella; "as missus don't seem to know much 'bout Richmond, s'pose she tells me whar she's a-goin' an' I'll take her dar myself."

"If you know of any poor family," said I, "living in a decent sort of a place, who would shelter me for one night, you can take me thither. To-morrow I expect to go on to Charleston, traveling night and day."

"S'pose dat you come home to-night wid me," she suggested. "My massa's house isn't sech a very gret ways off, and Massa Skarfeller isn't at home to-night, he's gwine out ob de city, an' I speck to be all alone for tree days."

The last observation led me to consider the proposal. The name of Scarefellow was not very inviting, but neither the man nor his name was anything to me. Cinderella's allusion to him as quite an old massa reconciled me to the chances of an accidental encounter with him; she had assured me he would not be home in three days, and I decided that an acceptance of her invitation would be a far less evil than a nocturnal wandering through the streets, and of anything else there was not the most distant prospect. I made four expressive knots in the several corners of my handkerchief, and putting the same on my head, pursued Cinderella along that quarter of the street which could deserve the name of quiet only by comparison. We were soon at the wharves, whose plank-ing ran up behind a sort of scattered Dutch settlement

of red brick and old wooden houses, and followed the line of shipping to a scoop in the harbor opposite which was a row of more pretentious buildings. In the centre of this row Cinderella opened a gate which an iron weight swung shut behind us, and through a little yard conducted me to a one story frame house with an attic on top, and a small extension room built out in front. Across the front ran a sign rudely painted on an old board:

.....
 : O. SKAREFELLOW. BOTES TO LET. :
 : :

Cinderella took from her pocket a good-sized key, by means of which she unlocked the door, and invited me to enter. I found myself in an outer compartment, seemingly used as a magazine for disabled oars, fishing-nets, harness, and articles of like description, all which I judge from the fact that I endangered my neck in stumbling over a few such specimens before I followed Cinderella into the inner room, where soon, with the aid of a match and a candle, she threw some light upon the subject. It was a good-sized room, furnished with a stout rag carpet and a cooking stove before the bare black chimney, a rough table, three or four chairs, and the walls were decorated by several coarse prints of madonnas, which led me to ask if Mr. Scarefellow were a Roman Catholic.

"He! he!" laughed Cinderella, evidently finding the question quite amusing. "No, missus, he isn't, nor anything else, I reckon. I bought dese yer little picters at an auction in a shanty, yesterday. No, no; dey ain't none of de folks yere's got much religion; but I tink Massa Scarefeller's about de best uv 'em."

"Folks! More people than you and your master in the place?" I exclaimed.

Cinderella was quite embarrassed, "Well, dars folks comes sometimes—comes to see Mas'r Skarfoller."

Cinderella now changed the conversation by conducting me up the stairs, which were objects that had engaged my attention on my entrance, though not noted till now in the catalogue—said stairs being in reality a step ladder set against the side of the wall, carpeted by a strip of ingrain, and balustered by a rope.

Cinderella ushered me into a barren compartment above. Here, tired and disheartened, I took off my satchel, whose strap had not parted company with my shoulder that day, and proceeded to adjust my disordered dress, while she went down to prepare supper. I was in that state of mind that bids to-morrow take care of itself, and sank wearily down by the window, pulled aside the ragged curtain, and looked out on the little yard by which I had entered. As there were but few buildings across the way, there was little to obstruct my view of that segment of the harbor washing the shore at a short distance from the opposite sidewalk. The stars were just appearing in the sky, and their light was reflected in the waves of the river, disturbed only by a few passing oars, for the bustle of the day was over. Before I had been many minutes at the window, a shallop, guided by a single pair of oars, though two men were seated within it, glided up the line of sloops and other vessels on the shore, and ran upon the shoals. The two occupants of the boat conversed a few moments, when one moved off at a rapid pace along the wharves, where his form was shortly lost among the shipping. The other waited to fasten the boat. He seemed to find some difficulty in selecting a mooring, and having at length secured the vessel to a stake that suited his purpose, came up with deliberate step to the quarter where the stone pavement gave the first appearance of a side-walk.

Of course, in the distance and gathering darkness, the features of the pedestrian were not distinguishable. there was, however, a certain freedom in his air, and an elegance attaching to his figure, on which I bestowed a passing admiration; for I supposed he would soon disappear from my sight. But, on the contrary, he followed, from the corner, a diverging line across the street, whose terminating line could be at this gate alone. I was not a little concerned when this indication was confirmed. The gate swung shut. The stranger had entered, and was coming up the short walk to the outer shed.

I ran to the head of the step-ladder with undefined sensation, called to Cinderella that somebody was coming to see Mr. Scarefellow, and bade her not to mention my name, a charge which, on farther reflection, I was sure she would obey. Cinderella hastened to tie on an apron, and adjust her turban, at the same moment that a confused trampling sounded in the outer room.

"What's the door locked for?" called a voice, after a severe shake on the portal. "Cinderella!"

"Oh, de goodness sakes! What shall I do?" exclaimed Cinderella to herself, in tones of consternation. "Wait a minute, massa," she called aloud. "Let you right in."

Cinderella drew the bolt of the inner door, and while I stood shivering with apprehension at the head of the step-ladder, and wishing there were some other outlet to the abode, the new-comer stalked leisurely in, called for his slippers, and ordered supper at once. With a quaking soul I noticed the dim outline of his back, turned towards the step-ladder, and the gentle aroma of a cigar was next perceptible.

"Wus jest a-buiddin' de fire as you cum, mas'r Scarefeller," said Cinderella, apologetically, "but dar ain't notin' much for tea. Tink it would be nice to hev some little fishes, don't you?"

Her master replied by an affirmative ejaculation. Cinderella proceeded.

"Dar's notin' nicer dan yer little trouts. Little trouts is nice now in de market. S'pose you likes 'em, does yer, massa?"

"Yes."

"Better step out an' git some, eh?"

"You may go if you like."

Cinderella bustled about uneasily. "Ain't you a-goin' out agin, massa, anywhars?"

"No."

Cinderella hauled a table, flourished a cloth, and rattled tea-cups energetically. After several attempts at speaking, she said, with some difficulty of articulation, "Mas'r Skarfellow, I've done somethin' very wrong since you've been gone."

"It would be something quite unusual if you had not," replied Mr. Scarefellow, in better language than the spelling of his advertisement-board would have led me to expect.

Cinderella chuckled. "Dat's so—but dis is little extra. Oh, massa, s'pect you'll be awful mad."

"Well, out with it. Can't you speak?"

Cinderella seemed to find some difficulty in speaking.

"Well, mas'r, dar's a lady here."

"A black woman?"

"No, real white lady," said Cinderella, growing bold, now that the ice was broken. "She's up stairs in your room."

"The deuce she is! What made you take her up in my room?"

"'Cause hadn't nowhar's else to take her."

"What did she come here at all for?"

"'Cause hadn't nowhar's else to cum to," hallooed Cinderella, who, right or wrong, was determined to give her

master as good as he sent. "De lady isn't very well. She lost all her money on de cars. She hadn't nowhar's to go. She didn't know nobody in Richmond. I seed her up in Jersey. Know'd she was a lady well 'nough."

"What's her name?"

"Dat's mor'n I know, massa."

"Well, you ought not to vouch for people until you know as much as that, at least. Now, then, I must say it's a devilish cool piece of business, and you must not do such a thing again."

"I didn't s'pect you home, massa."

"I know you didn't. That makes it all the worse. Have you ever known Mr. Ramorny or me to invite a woman into this house, or a man either, who didn't come after boats?"

"No, massa."

"Well, then, don't do such a thing again."

"I won't, massa. I'll go up now and tell her you've cum, an' she'd better go."

"No. You need not do that. I won't turn anybody out doors who is so anxious to come in as the female must be if she is ill, and has lost her pocket-book. Now, then, just get tea in a hurry. I've had nothing to eat since four o'clock this morning."

The deep, palatal tone of Mr. Scarfellow's voice was very familiar, but I had not ventured to trust my ears unsupported by my eyes, and now I came hurriedly down the step-ladder. No farther confirmation was needed. I could scarcely ejaculate, "Mr. Tomlin."

"Miss Renshawe! Good heavens!" It was difficult to say which was the more surprised, or the more delighted. Of the first hurried questions and answers, my mind was too disordered for retention. I was soon seated at the fireside, my old acquaintance opposite, and recount-

ing rapidly all my woes and adventures for the last few days. Tomlin listened in rapt attention.

"You must not think of leaving for Charleston by the route you propose," said he, when I had concluded. "For the next day or two your only safety lies in following my counsel."

"What danger can I encounter?" I asked.

"You say that Alice Ludlow heard Gallorda proclaim you a Union spy? In that case you have escaped very well until the accident that brought you here, and you must not tempt Providence further! If you attempt to go to Charleston or to leave this place openly, you will find your way at once blocked. You must avoid the railroad depots like a pestilence, if you would escape arrest."

Further discourse was postponed till after supper, and it grew so absorbing as to keep us in conversation till long after midnight. I had forgotten my weariness quite in the reunion, and was relieved of my recent distress when new plans had been sketched, and a new course decided on. Tomlin proposed, and I adopted his propositions without cavil. He said that he was about to leave Richmond on the following day by water. He would bring me to a point whence I could pursue my way to Charleston unimpeded.

"Now, then," said I, when the final arrangements had been concluded, "I am without finances, and must ask for a loan."

Tomlin's face illumined. "As long as I have a crust, you know who will divide with you," was his reply. He turned the oil lamp to a higher blaze, emptied a purse of its silver, and a pocket-book of its bank notes, counted them over hastily, and handed it all to me.

"But this is not dividing," said I. "It is giving me all."

"No. I can get more to-morrow. There is little more than enough there to take you to Charleston."

There were nearly fifty dollars. I knew it was all he had, and was not so sure that he could get more on the morrow; but Tomlin would not hear to any refusal.

Tomlin advised me against making any effort whatever to take my trunk. He thought I might be thankful to make good my escape. I acquiesced in the opinion at last, securing the check, that I might, at some future day, recover my property from the express office, and made up my mind to depart, with my satchel as my only baggage, from Richmond.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ONE incident of our sail down the river must be detailed. Tomlin entered the cabin of the boat when we had been an hour under way, and inquired: "Did you destroy that paper that Gallorda inspected, when you came across the border?"

"No, not yet."

"Do it now then; it is a very dangerous thing for you to carry."

I opened the satchel, and took out carefully all the contents. No paper was there.

"Lost!" suggested my companion.

"Mr. Tomlin," said I, "that paper is in my trunk in Richmond. I put it in it a day or two ago, and forgot to take it out again."

Tomlin looked a little grave, but finally decided to reassure me, by saying that there might be no danger in leaving it there. The trunk might not be molested. I asked if he thought it would be well to go back in quest of it; and produced my ticket for its safe keeping.

Tomlin smiled, advised me not to risk anything to

keep the ticket; probably I would not want it till the war was over and the matter was laid at rest.

I parted from Tomlin with sadness of heart; he furnished me with full directions how to proceed, with the most cheering assurances, charging me to repress my anxiety to hear from my mother till I reached Suffolk, whence I might telegraph in safety, and after seeing me en route for that place, and regretting that I was not accompanying him to the North, he bade me farewell.

At Suffolk, I telegraphed to Charleston. The reply came from one of my unknown relatives, and contained the following announcement: "Mrs. Renshawe is well. Left Charleston with Helen two weeks since."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Misdirected strength will often show itself like weakness,

ONLY A WOMAN'S HEART.

NONE but those who have suffered from anxiety like that which this message relieved, will comprehend how speedily the intelligence revived my courage. My mother was well, and as she had been two weeks away from Charleston, was perhaps at home. My only thought now was how to get back myself.

Near the point where I had crossed the lines with Alice, I expected to make my way back with little difficulty. After several days spent at Suffolk, for the sole purpose of recruiting my wasted strength, I set out again for the North, a bourne which I longed from my very soul to reach.

It was about ten o'clock on a Monday morning, the fall of 1861, I was on board one of the cars of a very long train, whose course was generally northward. I had

been traveling for about five hours, my inseparable satchel firmly clasped to my side, and my eyes regaled by glimpses of scenery apparent from the banks on which the train occasionally ran. A company of soldiers was on board, as I became aware by seeing several of them slipping on and off at the stations.

The door of our car was opened suddenly by an officer, whom I recognized in unspeakable consternation! Captain Walby! I half arose from my seat; but too late for escape—he had seen me; his look of triumphant exultation left that past a doubt. With a leisurely step, as though to lengthen out the torture, he was coming toward me.

The lady at the outside of the seat was suddenly thrown against me at that moment, and I against the window. We had hardly exchanged a “beg your pardon,” when I went as forcibly in the other direction against the lady. The next thing I remember was a sudden flying together of the backs of the seats—a crash in front, screams, cries, exclamations, great excitement—car slanting and stationary on the bank, and everybody off with a rush. I followed the crowd as soon as sufficiently recovered to do so. The engine had run off the track with three cars, which had sustained the principal damage. The accident was a serious one, although the conductor tried to allay the excitement of the passengers by saying that he had seen worse ones.

In the midst of a commotion so occasioned, I had forgotten all about Captain Walby, who was certainly quite oblivious of me. I was first recalled to the knowledge of his existence, by perceiving him engrossed around the debris of a smashed-up car, from which the brakeman and passengers were extricating several injured soldiers, and as I saw that no earthly advantage could accrue to me or any of my fellow-creatures by my linger-

ing in that hostile vicinity, I drew up my shawl about my shoulders, and, regardless of certain bruises, of which I was conscious as soon as I got in motion, I walked away on the track as fast as I could to the next station.

It was not more than a mile before me. Everybody there was talking about the accident in so much excitement, that I could hardly gain any attention; inasmuch as I did not proclaim my late journeying on the cars. I lingered there hardly long enough to learn where I was, and heard, with a thrill of exultation, that I was little more than twelve miles from an important town, then occupied by the Union army.

Trembling with hope, and not daring to put a single question that might compromise success, I walked off to the northward. I saw no reason why my progress to the goal I sought to reach need be impeded. With Captain Walby, my greatest risk was evaded. I did not think any obstacle to my course would now be insurmountable.

I was soon worn and tired with the walk, and having reached a quiet nook in the woods, I sat down to ponder my chances of escape, and find a short rest. I had just emptied the dust from my boots, and cooled my temples at a spring, when a sound of human voices warned me that I could not remain long unmolested; and I plunged into the adjacent bushes, where I waited, scarcely daring to breathe, till the train should pass by.

It was six cannons with mud-laden wheels, drawn by powerful beasts of burden, and escorted by a small party of soldiers. On the mound which I had just quitted they stopped, and a consultation ensued to which I was an interested listener.

"It won't never do, Jeems," said one; "hosses caen't never tote these yer guns up the hill to the camp to-night. Mud was nation thick in the holler, an' ef we

get stuck in the bogs up yunder, it'll take all the critturs on airth to haul us out."

"Well, leave the nags yere, an' go arter more critturs," responded another; "take a dozen apiece an' we'll git the guns up the hill right smart."

This proposition was assented to; after tying the horses to the neighboring trees, the party struck off in the direction of the camp.

It was a still autumn day. The foliage of the forest had put on hues of red and gold—the declining sun was a fiery ball in the atmospheric haze, and the moon had been visible since midday in the heavens. I knew the soldiers would not return under an hour, and emerging from my concealment, I began to look about leisurely on the surroundings.

The cannons belonged to the United States, as I saw by their labels. U. S. was on the harness of the horses; it was clearly all the stolen property of the Government. Dangerous as was my own position, I could not see this without a transient emotion of indignation. I looked again at the sky—adown the valley—on the hills toward which the sun was tending. Westward, I knew, lay the rebel encampment; eastward, through a road filled with enemies, lay my route home. I was all alone; there was nothing human near. With resolute hands I began to untie the horses.

They were soon all at liberty, their heads directed towards the east.

It took me some time to complete these arrangements, notwithstanding that the animals moved with all the docility of thoroughly trained artillery horses, but at last the cannons, with the caissons, of which last there were only two, stood in Indian file in the road.

This was all done, and no one had come; and mounting the foremost cannon. I applied the whip to the

horses and gave them the rein. They moved at a lagging gait, and I was oftentimes tempted to abandon the enterprise I had undertaken; but when it grew after sunset, and I found I was a considerable distance from the camp, and still unmolested, my hopes grew stronger, and I calculated to make my way out of the enemies' ground before daybreak.

On one hill the straps gave way in the middle of the train, dividing a gun-carriage from the horses behind it, and it cost me no little time and trouble to repair the deficiency. Coming through the forest, every wheel on one side sank in a rut nearly to the hub, causing a great commotion among the horses, as they were successively taxed to jerk out their burdens. I watched this process with anxiety; the last wheel fairly gave way, and the disabled gun-carriage anchored the whole train in the middle of the road.

Nothing could be done but to leave it; I detached the horses and we moved on, thankful that I had been obliged to sacrifice no more than one gun. It was growing quite dark; I was forced to proceed with more caution, and it cost me no little trouble to avoid the ruts in the road.

I was still pursuing a circuitous route through the forest, and it was full two hours after sunset, when a noise like the trampling of hoofs alarmed me. I immediately stopped my own team, hoping to lie concealed in the gloom until the approaching party had passed by. The hope was vain; an unlucky snort from one of the horses revealed our vicinity. I made an attempt to escape with those that had drawn the broken guncarriage, but it was too late.

"Here; come up with the lanterns," shouted one of the party, the dim outline of whose figures appeared in the darkness. "We'll find out what team this is. Why laws;

there's a hull drove. Fetch the light, and be quick. Yours respectfully, Good."

This peroration, conjuring up reminiscences of Blue Hills, Rocky Cross, and Caney Fork in old Maryland, brought some hope of deliverance. I pressed hastily forward, as the lights were brought up, and fell on my face.

"Oh!" Good drew out the ejaculation to the utmost power of extension, rolling a quid of tobacco reflectively in his cheek. "Methinks I've seen your face before—Shakespeare! Well, wait here boys till the rest of the party come up. You ain't alone here ma'am, with so much gun."

I did not answer. A dim recollection flashed upon me that Good had deserted from the Federal army, and joined the rebels. I felt that I had now to deal with that most despicable of all characters, a traitor to the flag he had sworn to protect; the dog among wolves.

As they came in sight of the guns one after another, questions were put to me as to where they came from; where I was going with them; whose they were; et cetera.

To all this, I made no response. Good grew irate. He descended from his horse and approached me with a flourish of the sword, demanding how far I had come with those cannon, and whither I was bound with them. As I was still speechless, he thundered the question in my ear; finding that he forced no answer, he threw me with violence on the ground.

I was not stunned nor at all injured, and rose amid the murmurs of the soldiers, directed against the unmanliness of the officer. A severe rebuke was uttered by one, in whose mouth it seemed to carry authority, and while Good was defending himself, a reinforcement to the party came up from behind.

"Here comes the colonel!" exclaimed several of my captors. The lanterns were elevated, and voices raised in greeting. "Hallo, colonel, we've captured five cannons, with these teams.

"How many in charge?" asked a voice which thrilled through my every nerve, as I recognized it. It was Hunter's. "One," replied Good, with an uneasy laugh.

"Yes, sir, one," said an out-spoken officer, "who has just been knocked down by Captain Good without provocation."

"For shame, sir!" said Hunter, sharply. "A prisoner is sacred."

Good began to apologize volubly, but Hunter cut him short.

"A man who insults a prisoner is a coward. That's enough, sir—fall back. Corporal, find the man a horse, and bring him in with your guard,"

"Man!" exclaimed the corporal. "It's a woman."

"A woman!" repeated Hunter in indescribable tones.

"Yes, colonel," said Good in the most subdued and meek of voices. "Her name is Shaker. I met her once in Maryland."

"Very well—bring her with the guns," rejoined the colonel, and to my great relief he rode on without having seen me. Finding that I was plunging deeper and deeper in dilemmas, my chief concern was to keep as quiet as I could, so I availed myself of the horse brought by corporal, and moved on in the rear of the party.

It was a fatiguing night for me. The column, guns, and all were in motion till daybreak. As soon as the light broke over the hills, I discovered that I was moving in the rear of a larger body of men than I had suspected from the noiselessness and celerity of their movements. A fresh breeze was blowing up, and the sun was

just breaking in full glory over the mountains as we rode upon an acclivity where the waving banners betokened the close vicinity of a town under Confederate rule.

"Where are we now?" I asked of my escort.

"This is Port Evelyn, madam."

"Is it Colonel Hunter's head-quarters?"

"Don't know as it's anybody's much. Colonel Hunter's here, maybe—maybe not. He won't be here long."

I asked no further questions. The termination of our long night's journey had come, and I was shut up under close guard for the day.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ON awaking from a deep sleep about the middle of the day, I was so far recovered from my fatigue that I at once set about explaining my situation. I was confined in the ruins of a Roman Catholic church, the body of which had been destroyed by fire. What was left of the pews and chancel had been used by the soldiers to stable their horses; the vestry-room remained intact, except that the walls were blackened by the smoke, and it was here that I was kept under lock and key. From the windows there was no chance of escape, as a high wall, erected on the outside, not only debarred egress, but prevented a view of anything without, and to a great extent excluded the light of day. All doors were secured with the exception of one that led to the belfry, which, contrary to the usual custom, was placed above the vestry-room of the church. I ascended first, by a dilapidated stair-case, next by a step-ladder into this compartment. The steeple had fallen, and from the

turret I emerged into the open daylight, whence I could command a prospect of the country.

The view to the North was shut off by a range of hills running down westward, till their pinnacles were lost in the distance. Port Evelyn, a town not remarkable for its size or beauty, lay to the East, and was situated on the curve of a river seemingly turned out of its course by a mountain on the opposite shore. Southward lay a section of country wearing that air of desolation too frequently accompanying the march of an army, which he who has once seen can never mistake. Fields laid waste without the scythe, harvests brought low without the sickle, trampled grain and leveled fences, house, cottages and barns in ruins—these were everywhere—ravages by another hand than that of Time.

At Port Evelyn itself, all was in keeping. Iron-works, mill and manufactory, all were still. One building was prominent over all. This was a substantial house of stone, and bearing those indications which mark the owner a man of opulence and taste. The main building was square, furnished with balconies, awnings, arches and a white railing running round the roof where the Confederate flag was conspicuous. The wings, which were many, took rambling and disorderly forms. The mansion stood near the river as well as I could determine, and when I marked the number of soldiers, glancing by the windows, grouped on the balconies, and passing back and forth from the out buildings, I decided that the most favored place had been chosen for the headquarters.

As it was the most interesting spot to which I had had access yet, I remained in the belfry watching the movement of the soldiers at the distant building while the daylight lasted. A short time after sunset, as I began to contemplate an abandonment of my post, some

loud voices below made me aware that my guards wanted to know why the devil I had climbed up there—didn't I know they would be in a peck of trouble if I couldn't be found? They understood that I was a woman that was forever getting into some mischief, and I'd better come down from that while it was light enough to be seen.

I obeyed with alacrity. My guards, whose hearts were still beating with the alarm inspired by my non-appearance, informed me gruffly that I must not be out of the way, for they had orders to bring me before Governor Chives within the half-hour, and if I had any getting ready to do, it must be done in the interval. Excited by this intelligence, I pushed all the getting ready in my power by endeavoring to compose my mind for the coming meeting, and to reflect calmly on my method of defence before the formidable tribunal.

The vestry-room in which I was confined was as dark as a dungeon, and there was nothing to distract my thoughts, except the occasional snort of a horse on the outside, or the blow of a hoof on the floor. Some words at last attracted my attention.

"I tell you what, it's resky," said one of the guards. "I hope it won't be sech a gret while we're yere clus by the inimy's kentry. Ye ort to hev seen how black the ole governor looked to-night, when he found the reinforcements wasn't comin'. With the kentry full o' spies what's to pervent the Yankees from findin' out how few thar is here, and what we're waitin' for, though they do fetch in the ammunition by night?"

"Wal, don't be talkin'," rejoined the other. Their voices died away, leaving me to console myself by the reflection that the present Confederate corps was not so secure as it might be in its own estimation.

When considerable time, more than half an hour, had elapsed, a key worried open the rusty lock, a ray from a

lantern fell across the floor, and I was ordered to come forth. There was no moon visible, for the sky was clouded. I followed my guide as he picked his way with muttered curses through the entangled branches of the fallen trees about the churchyard. The imposing building I had noticed from the belfry was lighted up from garret to cellar. For this the soldier struck in a direct line across the grove, and I followed, glad that suspense, at least, had neared its termination.

I was conducted up a flight of stone steps, and within the building, followed my conductor across a hall, and found myself next in a sort of small reception-room, with a part of the wall torn away. There were several women there already, some Irish, some Scotch, one or two thorough-bred Yankees, whose manners and attire proclaimed them all to belong to a degraded class of human beings. They were called out one after another; a lot of four had just been summoned; and a period of time elapsed which I hardly thought would suffice for the disposal of any case, when my guard looked in and called authoritatively, "Shaker."

Knowing well enough by whose cognomen I was figuring, I followed the soldier within a square, and what had once been an elegant room; but the hasty arrangement of the furniture to meet the requirements of its present denizens, the torn carpet, the defaced panels, the curtainless windows, the damaged paintings, only marked what once had been.

At the head of the room, seated by a table, sat the unmistakable Governor Chives. Just at his elbow, and back of the lamp, was the still more unmistakable Colonel George Berkley. There was another table, improvised from two chairs, and an injured pier-glass. Several weary looking young men, in citizen's clothes, sat at this table, some writing busily, those nearest to the governor with

pens behind their ears. The harp of a shattered piano stood against the wall, and Captain Whipplestaff was pulling at the strings by way of pastime, producing sounds with a torturing variety. Otherwise the room was full of officers, talking in undertones, and floating in a cloud of tobacco-smoke from the folding doors, where sat the governor, to the windows at the farther end. No body stirred when I came in. Colonel Berkley sat with his sideface and shoulder turned toward the arena which I had just entered, close in conversation with a uniformed gentlemen, who wore a very long, black beard. He had not seen me yet, and after a second glance had assured me of his identity, I put my hands behind me, according to my custom when at a loss what to do with them, and with my eyes on the floor, awaited what was coming next.

A moment's breathing-time was allowed me, while Governor Chives consulted some memorandum lying beside him on the table.

"Let me see"—the murmur was almost inaudible—"Blue Hills—Shaker—ah—this is Good's affair—Peters, call Captain Good!" Peters withdrew. Chives jerked off his eyeglasses. "Your name, madam, if you please."

"Louisa Renshawe."

At this reply, spoken without drawl or brogue, or Yankee twang, a dozen heads were lifted and turned simultaneously toward me. Every voice in the room, including even Berkley's, stopped short.

"Where were you born?" demanded the governor.

"In New York," I replied. All the scribes at the table set their pens in motion and made a note of the fact.

"Whereabouts in New York?"

"At the village of Renshawe, near Lopetown, Long Island."

"Have you lived there all your life?"

"Until within a year." All this intelligence was transcribed at the table.

"Where have you been since March of this year?" continued my questioner.

I mentioned the several places of my sojourn. I had been at New York, at Spuytenduyvil, at a village in Maryland, at Washington, at White Chimneys in Virginia, at the city of Richmond, at Suffolk, and at Port Evelyn.

Chives waited for the clerks to finish the enumeration, and then put the next question :

"Supply the name of the village in Maryland you alluded to."

"Blue Hills."

"While at Blue Hills, did you, or not, ride forty miles on horseback, at dead of night, to report the presence of a body of Confederate troops, at Rocky Cross, to a Federal force at Caney Fork, by which means the Confederate body were routed, and their prisoners taken?"

"I rode neither forty miles, nor altogether at dead of night," I replied. "I did report the intelligence you speak of, and the consequences you have mentioned did ensue."

"That's confessed," pronounced Chives. "What's the other charge?—Berkley, did you take the paper?—ah!"

At this juncture, Good, summoned by Peters, made his appearance. He was called on to state as quickly as possible all that he knew about me. He stated at once that I was a Miss Shaker, from Blue Hills, in Maryland ; he entered into the history of my exploit at that quarter, and finally announced my last offence—that I had carried away several cannons, horses and all, and had been arrested for the same by his company. One of the same company was called upon to support the statement. He alleged that it was all true, that the lady had been running away with the cannon, and that she came so fast,

that she smashed one gun all up on the road ; moreover, when taken by the soldiers, she had increased her crimes by attempting to get off on one or both of the horses.

Governor Chives inquired what my errand had been in the South.

"Sir," said I, "my mother was ill at Charleston, and it is now two weeks since I crossed the lines with the single object of seeing her."

"Then why in the course of those two weeks are you not at Charleston, instead of lingering about Richmond and Suffolk?"

"I telegraphed to Charleston from Suffolk," said I, "received intelligence that my mother had left for the North, and have been endeavoring to recross the lines."

"That's all very plausible," remarked Chives, "but could you not have crossed the lines without taking six of my guns with you?"

"Perhaps so," I replied, "if the guns had been labeled K. G. C; but they were marked U. S., and I concluded that they were the property of the Government; therefore it was only my duty to attempt their restoration to their lawful owners. I regret that the attempt was more ambitious than successful."

"I dare say you do. Humph! Good, had this enterprising damsel any package or papers about her?"

"She had this satchel," said Good, presenting that article, which was laid on the table as so much contraband of war. Now the satchel was evidently empty, and Good said he had found therein a hair-brush, a hat-brush, a clothes-brush, and another brush, and he'd be hanged if he could tell what that brush was for.

"Nothing but brushes in the bag?" said the governor impatiently.

"Only one thing of significance, sir: a ticket for a trunk left at Richmond."

“Where’s the ticket?”

“It is on its way to Richmond. I sent it by one of my men, who is to examine the trunk and report the contents.”

“It was not worth while,” said Chives indifferently. “The case is plainly made out, eh Berkley? The girl is here under an assumed name, and her deeds condemn her.”

Captain Whipplestaff here advanced with some spirit. “I crave permission to speak one word, Governor. This young lady’s name is Wenshawe, and her mother has been ill at Charleston. I met her at White Chimneys.”

Chives replaced his eye glasses and eyed me keenly.

“Why were you officiating at Blue Hills under the name of Shaker, Miss Renshawe?”

I denied that I had assumed any name but my own.

“Where do you belong?”

“To the North—Long Island,” I repeated, not a little annoyed at this evidence that I was not believed.

“I know you belong to the North, young lady. I mean by what particular division of the Northern army have you been employed?”

“By none.”

“You deny, in the face of all our recent evidence, that you are a spy?”

“I do deny it, sir, emphatically, earnestly.”

This reply was unheeded by the governor. Berkley was speaking, and though what he said was lost on my ear, it contributed much to Chives’s amazement, who said, in a tone of surprised interrogation, “On what grounds?”

“As a personal favor,” said Berkley, quite distinctly.

“Certainly,” said the governor, immediately. “Certainly. Call in the next case.”

“How about this”—— Good began.

“Judgment reserved,” said Chives, hastily. “That is to say, it is in Colonel Berkley’s hands.”

"You may relieve yourself of all further responsibility, Captain Good," remarked Berkley.

Overpowering resentment swelled my whole heart. I turned impulsively, recklessly toward the governor.

"Sir," said I, "if my liberty is at *Colonel Berkley's* disposal, I would rather abide by—the alternative."

Chives had taken up the next paper. He measured me with a deliberate stare, then said, coolly: "Alternative? There isn't any. Corporal, take away the lady, and go to Colonel Berkley for your orders."

Plainly there was no appeal, and swallowing my overwhelming wrath and chagrin, I followed the corporal from the apartment. Where I was to go next was a matter seemingly unsettled.

"Is Colonel Berkley's prison anywhere near Governor Chives's?" I inquired of my conductor, "or is it all one establishment?"

"All one consarn, I reckon," said the corporal; "but I see they're hevin' the rest on 'em at supper in the basement. I didn't hev no orders agin yer hevin' supper. Any how, ye can't get out of the house, and what *to* do with ye"——

The man was apparently so tipsy that he had hardly inteliect enough left to execute the orders he had received. I was rejoiced beyond measure when Captain Whipplestaff appeared on the scene. He immediately professed his regret at having met me in such a situation, and asked anxiously what I was to do next. I said I did not suppose that my own movements would be at my own disposal.

"Well, now, the twuth is, Miss Wenshawe," said the captain, "'tis an extwemely unfawtunate piece of business. Extwemely unfawtunate, and if there was anything I could do to extwicate you, I would do it with pleasure. But you see, it was quite out of the question for me to

know much about you, and the twuth was, I was so bewil-dahd! Those cannons have weally played the mischief, and though I of cawth will do all I can for you, still I'm not the colonel, and you must wely on the colonel as your pwincipal ally."

"Captain Whipplestaff," said I, indignantly, "I did not ask to be Colonel Berkley's prisoner, nor shall I desire him to act as my ally."

"Well, now, Miss Wenshawe, fact is you do need a fwend, and though it's not my affiah, I think you'll be very foolish to act so towards the colonel. You're not supposed to be his pwisonah, Miss Wenshawe. He has not even intimated that he wegards it in that light, and if I were you, I should just waive all scwuples, and sink all pwide, and accept his assistance. Then the woad's cleah. You may, of cawth, depend on my fwriendship, but I'm not infwuential, Miss Wenshawe, and the colonel, he's the weal king here. Governah Chives is wuled by him altogethah. If he says bwack is white, the old man swears to it. You're no moah the colonel's pwisonah now than you were when you were bwrought here. You might at least see the colonel, I think."

"I suppose, of course," said I, surprised, "that the colonel could see me if he chose it."

"Well, he doesn't seem to think so," replied Captain Whipplestaff.

"Did he send you to find out?" I asked quickly.

"Just so. He wanted me to say to Miss Wenshawe fwom him, that if she will accept his assistance he is entirely at her service, and if you are willing to see him, and he thinks it quite necessawy you should, I am to tell him so. That is all."

This conversation had run on at some great length. I was too wavering between my present distress and former indignation to give a more decided answer. Mr.

Whipplestaff stood by the bench whereon I sat, twisting and tying a broken string of the harp, talking on as volubly as ever, when Colonel Berkley came through the hall. He caught my eye as I looked up with a troubled, nervous glance, and probably not thinking it worth while to wait for the result of the captain's commission, he came up to us directly. I rose with a deference and hauteur by no means an impossible mixture, both in my soul and my manner. I tried to speak, but utterance was denied me, and I could only stand with trembling nerves and shortened breath, pulling at the string of my gipsy hat till it broke.

"I trust you will pardon me," said Berkley, "for not offering my services in person, Miss Renshawe, but we have had important business on hand, and I am but just at liberty. You have only to say in what way I can assist you, and I will be happy to do so as far as lies in my power."

"In any way you please," I replied, repressing a declaration that I would accept no favor at his hands.

"It will be impossible for me," he continued, "to give you your liberty under a day or two, but until I can, you may remain under this roof as a guest of Governor Chives, if you will give me your promise that you will make no attempt to escape, or to communicate with the enemy."

I was too fond of freedom not to yield to the tempting prospect of comparative liberty. I thought of the mural solitude of the vestry-room, and slender chances of escape. After a moment's hesitation, I replied, "I am very grateful for your offer, Colonel Berkley. It is more than I expected. My word is given. I will obey the conditions."

"Come this way," was the immediate direction, and rejoiced to be relieved from the exceptional din of the hall, I followed my new conductor through the hall and

up the stairs. The guards on the landing-place drew back. Berkley stopped at an elegantly arched door of the hall, waited till I dragged myself forward, and opened it with the invitation, or rather command, "Take my arm."

I obeyed, and was led within. It was the apartment immediately over the trial-chamber, and, from its interior, had been unmolested by the soldiery. It was lit by several lamps, and tenanted by several ladies, all dressed in evening costume, as though sojourning safely in a peaceful city. Berkley led me directly across the room to a lady who was seated in an arm-chair by the fireplace. She was encircled, and surrounded, and veiled by white robes floating over the chair, and swept around on the floor. The bracelets on her handsome arms were their only ornaments, and her black hair was rolled away from one of the most amiable faces I ever had looked upon. As, in my soiled and disordered dress, and unregulated tresses, I came in contact with so much white lace and satin, I felt that I looked forlorn enough."

"Mrs. Deschapples," said Berkley, "allow me to introduce Miss Renshawe. She remains under your charge during her stay."

Mrs. Deschapples rose hastily, and politely bade me welcome, then turned to my companion

"Be back by ten, my dear Berkley, if possible. Uncle Chives will not allow us any supper till you come."

Berkley promised to be back if possible, and withdrew. While I was answering Mrs. Deschapples's inquiries I was suddenly speechless at sight of two very dark eyes across the room regarding me with a sardonic expression. The next moment my cousin Alice was at my side.

"I am rejoiced to meet you, Mrs. Deschapples. This young lady is my cousin, and for some time a fellow-traveler. Come, my dear Louisa, hurry up stairs with me, and get some decent clothes on."

Relieved to find Alice in a spirit more amicable than the mode of our last parting would promise, I followed her from the room. Chives and the colonel were in close conversation at the head of the stairs. The governor glanced up at us as we passed.

"So that girl is out?" he said in a low tone.

"On parole," rejoined Berkley.

"Lord! does she know what it is? Will she keep it?"

"Knows? Yes," said the colonel.

"Well, perhaps so. A woman who unsexes herself so far as to conduct horses and cannons about the country——"

The rest of the speech I did not hear, nor did the beginning promise enough for the end to cause any regret for the loss.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHICH THE HEROINE MINGLES IN SOCIETY.

MULTIFARIOUS were the questions that I put to my cousin during my hurried toilette in the dressing-room above stairs. Alice had never seemed so communicative in her life before.

I found that the house in which I was, was the property of a noted Union man, of high consideration, at Port Evelyn, who had gone North with his family, and that at present it was used as a temporary arsenal for arms that were coming in daily, through purchase and otherwise. More than that, it had formerly been a headquarters of rebel spies and agents, attached to the interests, or under the supervision of Governor Chives. Alice informed me that Mrs. Deschapples was the widow of an

officer in the rebel service, who was a nephew of Chives himself, and that she was sister to no less a person than Mrs. Brancton, whom circumstances had given me so much reason to remember, and that nearly every one of the ladies I had seen below in the parlor, was in the service of the rebel government. My cousin no longer pretended to deny her own share in the predominant fealty.

"And you are enlisted on the other side," said Alice, significantly ; "only want of skill has made you unsuccessful. My dear, when you have served your State as long as I have mine, you won't attempt to take off a whole battery, through a line of pickets."

I hastened to correct Alice's surmise immediately, and explained the whole matter all through, in as few words as possible. Alice listened attentively. She owned Good was a thoroughly despicable being ; he had deserted to the South, with nearly half his company. I spoke of Good's rifling my property, left at Richmond, and of the fact that the paper inspected by Gallorda, the day of my encounter with him, was contained in the trunk. Alice was thoroughly amazed at my carelessness, and thought it would be a most unfortunate circumstance for me if that paper were presented to Governor Chives.

"But you can tell him, Alice," said I, earnestly, "that I am your cousin, and that I am really no spy, can you not ?"

Alice shook her head.

"Why, Alice," I exclaimed, "you surely do not doubt my assertions, do you ?"

"As your cousin," said Alice, gravely ; "as one who knows you intimately, and loves you strongly, I may believe you ; but as an emissary of Governor Chives, and his clique, acting in the service of the Southern government, I cannot believe you. You must not feel hurt,

Louise ; my oath obliges me to distrust the angel Gabriel."

"Then it is a very wicked oath that you have taken," said I, hotly, "if you must turn against your own relatives"——

"Stay, my dear," said Alice, earnestly ; "when you next see me in Washington, collecting all the information I can, and traveling about to the Northern cities, won't you consider it *your* duty, who are bound by no oath, to inform the authorities?"

"No, Alice, I am not more confident now, that you are a Southern emissary, than I was last March ;" and the Black Robin, in full council, rose vividly before my mind.

"Well," said my cousin, "spies, after all, have little love of country. A Northern lady, who knew my calling perfectly to be the same as her own, met me in Washington, was among my friends there—she a spy for the North, and I for the South ; but it was a mere matter of merchandise with her. I would not betray her here. I can conceive of a sister's love as scarcely greater than that I have felt for Cassy and you ; therefore, I say I would have seen you here, day after day, without endangering you by a word, but when it comes to going before Chives, and saying on my own responsibility, that it would be safe to trust you, I say the act would be perjury, because I do know circumstances that tell against you. I see you have a great deal of nerve, and a great deal of spirit—proper qualities for public service—and as for your denial, that is a matter of course. All spies will deny their character."

"I would never embark in a profession that exacts such a sacrifice of principle," said I.

"I know," said Alice, demurely, "you are better than I; you always were. I didn't join the church, and you

did, and the Rev. Mr. Aldovine said you were his most promising subject in the confirmation class"—

"Never mind," I interrupted; "I don't altogether fancy your way of drawing distinctions. Give me some idea when Good will be coming with the papers, that I may prepare for my fate."

"Oh, the paper I had forgotten. Well, the best advice I can give you, is to make your escape as soon as possible."

"That's not possible; I am on parole."

"Parole! who offered you that, Chives?"

"Colonel Berkley."

"You need give yourself no uneasiness, then. If Berkley takes your part, Good cannot injure you, if he came with a trunk full of papers."

"But will not the appearance of the paper, influence Colonel Berkley against me?"

"My advice, all I can do for you," said Alice, "can be soon given. Just take the first opportunity of speaking to Colonel Berkley—to-night if it offers, if not, request an interview with him in the morning. Lay the case plainly before him, and it will all be provided for."

"Has he so much influence with the governor?"

"Influence! Berkley holds the sway here altogether. Oh, yes; Chives consults with him, and appeals to him in everything. Mrs. Deschapples is in love with him, in the first place."

"How do you know it?"

"In the same way that anybody knows it. You'll see it yourself in a day or two. I don't know that her heart is very much involved, but she is a terribly ambitious woman, and Berkley is rising fast. His name is already before the government for promotion to a generalship. The governor is attached to him for many reasons. He is a strange man, the governor—timid on some occasions

and brave on others. He is never afraid of open foes, but always shrinks from concealed dangers. He never comes to the supper-table, except in company with Colonel Berkley, that he may be sure the wine is not poisoned."

As we were just then summoned to supper, I had no time to inquire how the mere fact of Berkley's company should guarantee the innocuous character of the wine, and could only account for it by the supposition that the colonel was too generally beloved to be so endangered. Neither Chives nor Berkley appeared at the table, at which we were all comfortably seated by ten o'clock at night. The male portion of the community was represented by two clerks of the governor's ménage, and with this exception, a board twelve feet long was surrounded by females, from whose faces it was in several instances hard to believe they belonged to the honorable fraternity for which their manners and morals apparently unfitted them. In these instances my heart inclined me to form exceptions; and I afterwards found I had singled out as innocent the very ones who were most skilled in their art. I marked their faces, but, with one or two exceptions, I never saw any of them again, and was content with a vague recollection of them as spies in blue, spies in white, spies in silk, satin, and spangles; spies in velvet caps, and Scotch plaids, with ornaments scanty as was judicious, interspersed here and there.

After supper I had a conversation with Mrs. Deschapples, in which both talked over family affairs to that extent in which people frequently indulge, when thrown together under circumstances so well calculated to promote acquaintanceship. I found she knew nearly every lady I could mention. Of Mrs. Brancton, she spoke at length, mentioning her in those terms of sorrowful affection with which one sister might speak of another

whose conduct had formed a prolific source of regret for her whole family.

The clerks had left the party immediately after supper, and the ladies solaced themselves by books, conversation, and cards, not to speak of six who circled a table for forty minutes, in the vain attempt to get up spiritual rappings, until twelve o'clock, when the party broke up.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WITH the first horn that sounded at early day-break I was awake, to find that several of the companions of my extensive sleeping apartment were astir, as some of them had errands that took them away by sunrise, and I hastened to dress before the rest were up. Alice was among the departing number, and before she left, she asked if I still intended to lay my case before Berkley.

I said yes, though I dreaded the interview greatly and intended to defer it as long as possible. Alice charged me not to be so foolish, but to anticipate Good at once ; the disagreeable task could take but a short time, and would not grow more agreeable by delay. One favor, however, she wished to ask ; this was, that I would not mention to Chives, to Berkley, or to anybody else, that I had crossed the lines in her company, unless I found it absolutely necessary to my safety to proclaim it. I gave the promise and we parted.

On coming below, I asked the first soldier I saw, if he knew where Colonel Berkley was, and I was referred to the room that had been the scene of my trial on the previous evening, for the gentleman of whom I was in

quest. To this apartment I immediately repaired. It presented an appearance more dilapidated and desolated by the dawning day than it had by candle-light. One clerk was writing at the same table, made from the pier glass, but it had been moved to the other side of the fireplace, and the tattered red window curtains were pulled together and secured with a case-knife. A couple of huge dogs lay on the floor, and the shadow of a horse's head frequently threw a deeper shade on the red curtain, as several animals were feeding just outside the window. A second clerk lay fast asleep on three chairs, his place at the table being occupied by Berkley, who was looking over several papers, making an occasional correction with a pen, under the flickering rays of a lamp just fading in the daylight. I knocked at the open door and was bidden to come in, by the clerk, who, on my compliance, desired me to be seated, and inquired civilly whether I wished to see Governor Chives. I said feebly that I wished to see Colonel Berkley.

"I will be at leisure in a moment," said Berkley.

How any man could collect his thoughts in such a din as that which rose incessantly in the courtyard, was a matter of surprise to me. Under the window it grew tremendous.

"Bring up the sorrel ; fetch up the bay ; trot out the black ;" hallowed some Stentor, while a small avalanche of grain rolled out of a sack, and the quadrupeds were forced to back down.

"What is going on out there ?" asked Berkley, of the clerk.

"It's the ladies' horses, sir ; they feed them here because the piano frame was thrown down close to the house, and it's a good trough for the oats."

This explanation seemed to satisfy Berkley, though I fancied that in the voice of the speaker I could detect a

little compunction for the instance of wanton destruction he mentioned. It made my own heart swell with indignation as I remembered how recently this very ground had been occupied by the troops of the United States, and this property respected. One of the young ladies came in at this juncture, habited for her expedition.

Berkley gave her several papers, and some directions, uttered in a low and confidential tone, occupied considerable time.

In the meantime I measured the damsel with critical eyes. She wasn't going on horseback. She wore a huge circular, of red and black plaid, a long feather in her black jockey cap, sharp angular face, curls multitudinous hanging over her back. Who was she like? I thought of Mrs. Rafferty's cousin, in the "Absentee," Miss Juliana O'Leary, "very iligant," and of Miss Glorvina O'Dowd in "Vanity Fair." This young lady had no name that I heard, however. Berkley confined himself simply to the personal pronoun during the dialogue.

She had gone at last, and the colonel pushed aside the papers and moved around facing me, with an air that expressed his readiness to listen to me.

I felt reluctant to speak before the clerk, not that I had anything to say that made secrecy imperative, but it was hard enough to discourse with Berkley, without being fettered by witnesses. I began my declaration by saying, that he had already been so kind to me, and I was so very grateful that I—in short, that he had interested himself so unexpectedly and so generously, that it was impossible for me to be able to say—that really he had been so exceedingly kind——

Here I stopped short, tried to collect my thoughts, and began again. Berkley listened in calmness to another speech, in which, I came no nearer the object than before; and ended, to my vexation, in the same

assurance, that he had been very kind. My auditor bowed in manifestation that that point was sufficiently luminous, and I came to a dead stop.

The clerk at the table, looked around.

"Sappers' and miners' musketoons?"

"Twelve," said Berkley; "stay, several were worthless; you may go down and inquire."

Before he had reached the door, the colonel added:

"Stop in the governor's room and bring me the minutes of Miss Renshawe's examination."

The clerk withdrew, and I proceeded without further preamble.

"If you recollect, Colonel Berkley, I have an enemy here, in Captain Good. He accused me of being a spy, and informed Governor Chives that he would prove it. I came in this morning to ask you about that."

"You are entirely beyond reach of Captain Good's enmity, Miss Renshawe," said Berkley.

"But he has told Governor Chives," said I, "that he intends sending for my baggage to Richmond. Now when it comes here, as it will in the course of this day, what will Governor Chives think about it?"

"His most natural reflection," replied Berkley, "will be, that Captain Good has taken a great deal of trouble."

The great question that presented itself to cause emotion in the next declaration, and one which had not occurred till now, was whether Berkley would lend to my unsupported assertions the credit they deserved. I went on with a steady voice, though my face betrayed no little excitement, to say that unfortunately Captain Good would find himself armed with a circumstance, in securing my baggage, strongly in favor of his charges. I had declared to Governor Chives, the night before, that I was not a spy, nor had ever acted as such; but that there was a paper in my trunk, from which Governor Chives would

certainly infer that I had served the United States in that character. Berkley was silent for some minutes. Never had I so longed for an answer. Just at that moment another young female entered, equipped for traveling, and the colonel and she stood by the table for full fifteen minutes talking over papers, and distances, and cities, while I remained in suspense. This girl was quite pretty, had an intelligent and pleasant face, and wore an unobtrusive, modest-looking dress. I saw directly that she was quite lost in admiration of Berkley, for she asked twice as many questions as were necessary, simply for the pleasure of listening to his replies. My heart was beating painfully high with suspense, before the door had closed after her. Berkley had scarcely recrossed the room and resumed his seat, when the door opened and the same female looked in.

“What’s the password, Colonel Berkley?”

“Manassas Gap.”

“The same as yesterday?”

“No ; yesterday it was Manassas Junction.”

“Thank you ; good morning,” and she was gone. Troubled as I was, I could not help wondering why in the world she could not have asked somebody outside ; there were plenty of people in the hall, and about the house. My turn had come again. Berkley’s first question was a relief.

“Is the paper you mention, a plan of our fortifications, or any sort of a journal in the political line?”

“It was only a letter.”

“How came it in your possession?”

In answer to so natural an inquiry, I made haste to give ample explanation. Withholding only Mrs. Jones’s name, I rehearsed her offers to me, mentioning that the whole idea of my undertaking such a mission, had originated with her ; stating the nature of the contents

of the document, and that neglect on my part had prevented its destruction. In this elucidation, I hoped Colonel Berkley would understand that the United States were not to be considered as having furnished me with authority.

"Your artillery movement, the other day, was all on your own responsibility, then?" he inquired.

"Certainly," said I. "I have no wish to deny my readiness to serve the United States."

"That readiness," said Berkley, "we would not object to, if displayed on the other side of the border, in a lint association or a hospital; but your manner of evincing it here, though highly novel, is not exactly to our taste."

"I am not a spy, Colonel Berkley, either on my own authority or that of the government." I uttered these words with spirit.

At that juncture the clerk returned, and handed a slip of paper to Berkley, before resuming his seat. I trembled for the issue. Berkley's eye ran over the record of my examination line; by line then came the very inquiry I had dreaded.

"Why did you not telegraph to your mother from Richmond, instead of from Suffolk?"

How could I explain, without saying that I feared Alice's representations to my injury, and then I must add that she crossed the lines with me.

"Colonel Berkley," I replied, "I could answer you satisfactorily, and if you see fit to insist upon it, I will, but I shall very much regret the necessity, and I would rather tell you, simply, that I had a reason for that course, without explaining what it was."

My voice had grown fairly inarticulate with emotion, before this sentence was complete.

"Very well," said Berkley, "you may make your mind easy on this matter. I'll put a stopper on Good, and if

you get into any further trouble, you may send for me."

I thanked the colonel, avoiding with some difficulty another declaration, that he was very kind, and quitted the room. In one thing I had been agreeably disappointed. Not by word or look had Berkley manifested the slightest doubt of what I alleged my position to be. I was painfully aware that my statements had an improbable sound; yet Berkley had accepted them with implicit faith within the very walls where accused were judged with little mercy, and where no one could reproach him for leaving me to a fate for which my actions had offered seeming justification.

I breakfasted alone with Mrs. Deschapples. As for the rest of the ladies, many of them had gone before that hour; and the others were to depart later in the day. After breakfast some time was spent in conversation, which lasted very late, and was at last interrupted by a message from the governor, requesting to see his niece below.

Mrs. Deschapples did not return, but I was not inconsolable, as both the house and its inmates furnished subjects for observation, which I was not loth to exercise.

The day was one unusually warm for the season. The sands of the coasts were hot, the earth seemed parched, and the twigs of the trees snapped with a brittle dryness. The air above was unrefreshed by a single cloud, and the hills, clothed in many colored foliage from base to summit, afforded not a single breeze to the arid fields below. Anxiety was afloat the whole day at Port Evelyn. Reinforcements expected had not arrived. Scouts had been kept all day on the watch, and it was reported that Colonel Berkley had been up four times, on top of the houses with a telescope, and each time had come down, looking no better pleased than when he went up.

On one of these occasions I had ocular and auricular proof. Colonel Berkley had just descended when Chives met him in the gallery.

"It's the most useless thing in the world, Berkley, to look for people that don't come."

"It's a very natural thing, sir," rejoined the colonel.

These to me were indications plain enough that help was needed, and I did not note them with regret. I had already looked with jealous eyes on the stacks of muskets, pyramidal piles of balls, and field-guns, including the six pieces captured with me, that filled the yard to the utmost capacity. My ear was vexed, in passing the doors of the corner room, to hear the incessant rattle of papers, and refrain in the reader's voice,—“pounds of shot”—“kegs of powder”—“cases of muskets”—“cartridges”—as the invoices were repeated and corrected. I had not seen Berkley since the morning, and being very tired of the house, I strolled out for a walk. The sentinel was talking to a man at the gate, and I was going quietly through, when a bayonet was thrust suddenly in front of me, to the great peril of my shawl, and a voice demanded: “Pass-word, ma'am, give the pass-word.”

It was the same soldier who had acted as my guard on the previous evening. I stated that I knew the pass-word, and asked to go on.

“My orders is, not to let no one pass athout they says it, ma'am,” replied the soldier.

“Manassas Gap,” said I. The soldier at once swung back the gate and permitted my exit.

I fluctuated, at first, between the wood and the river; the heat of the day decided me in favor of the first, and I was soon in the cool shade of the forest, though not out of sight of my prison walls. I could plainly discern the figures at the windows, on the roof and balconies,

and the lounging soldiers lazily smoking in the yard. I seated myself on a low bank overgrown with moss, where I gave myself up to a consideration of the vicissitudes that had marked the last days of my eventful career. A rustle close in the thicket startled me. I sprang up and was about running back as fast as my fears could impel me, when a low voice with the words "Miss Renshawe" arrested me. As I looked around, a man emerged from the bushes whom I at once recognized as the zouave Elisha.

"How in the world came you here!" I exclaimed. "If you were to be seen from the house you would be captured by the rebels. The country is full of them. Fly!"

"Kentry's full o' suthin else," said Elisha deliberately, "as well as rebels. I'm out a-scoutin, Miss Renshawe. I've joined a new regiment and got a new colonel."

"You came here purposely then," said I.

"To be sure, I did. My regiment's not very far from here; I expect to get back afore a great while. What's they got up there under that great spread o' white canvas? Needn't be kiveren' up so karful—won't keep it long."

I looked back at the building. The canvas of several tents had been stretched across the gun carriages, which were thus effectually concealed.

"Needn't tell—I know," said Elisha sententiously; "I seed they wus guns afore they got 'em blanketed. Seems to me it's a cussed slim set o' men they got to take care of so much ammunition."

"They are expecting reinforcements to-day," said I.

Elisha laughed. Just then I caught sight of a figure in a uniform at the edge of the wood. Elisha immediately disappeared in the thicket. The soldier advanced looking hard at the bushes, but the scout was gone.

"The colonel sent me to look for you, ma'am," said the soldier, suspiciously, as though he thought it an advisable

measure on the part of the colonel. The guard wore a peculiarly troubled look as I passed the gate."

"If you please, ma'am," said he, "would you be kind enough to mention to the colonel, ma'am, that you gave me the pass-word?"

"Certainly," said I; "I hope you do not apprehend any blame from the colonel?"

"Lord bless you, ma'am!" said the poor fellow, quite disturbed, "I don't know what minute I'll get shot ma'am. It's only last night, ma'am, the colonel hauled me over the coals, like a thousand of brick for leaving you while I got my supper. I tole him, says I, 'I left the young lady a-talkin' to Cap'n Whipplestaff, an' I knowed the gates wus all guarded, an' she couldn't got away;' but didn't make no difference about that, ma'am."

"Why," said I, "the colonel paroled me last evening."

"I know, ma'am, an' it was after he paroled you that he gave me the blowin' up. He said it was a first offence, so he'd pass it over; but I wusn't to leave a prisoner again if it was with President Davis; and now I've let you through the gates, ma'am, when I hadn't orter, and I'll get shot as sure as guns, ma'am, unless you'll have the condescension, ma'am, to mention about the pass-word; if they asks and if they doesn't ask it's no matter."

I went in with many forebodings. Just inside the hall, was the Governor. Instantly came the question; "Madam, who furnished you the pass-word?"

"I heard it this morning, sir, from Colonel Berkley."

"He gave it to you, did he?"

"No sir—I was talking to him this morning in the room where the secretaries were, and one of the spies came in and asked the password."

"*Spies!*"

I had not intended to say 'spies,' but the thought in my heart had escaped my lips unawares.

"One of the young ladies, sir," I added in no little confusion. "She inquired the pass-word, and Colonel Berkley said Manassas Gap."

"It was not the clerk who said it?"

"No sir—he had gone out. Colonel Berkley had just sent him out to see about the sappers and miners' musketoons."

Chives muttered something sounding like "sappers and miners' devil;" but as the questions were apparently ended, I moved away to the balconies, where I gave a smiling inclination on catching the eye of the guard, who received it with a stolid face, and reassured soul. When I came back, the Governor and Colonel Berkley were just at the foot of the circular stairs, leading off from the stone floor of the hall. I was forced to hear a few words before I could get their attention, or pass to the staircase. Chives was speaking: "You can't expect a woman to know what a parole is, Berkley."

"It's of very little consequence," said Berkley, in a nonchalant tone, "whether she knows or not."

"My dear fellow," said the governor, "Good has just handed me a paper found in her trunk at Richmond, clothing her with authority to act as a spy for the United States."

Chives took out his pocket-book, and submitted the document to Berkley.

"There's no proof that the proposal was accepted," replied Berkley, taking possession of the paper. "At all events, she has not the power to harm us, only the disposition."

"A most infernal disposition, if one may judge by her eyes," said Chives, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Yes; a very bad eye," replied Berkley.

The governor shook his head, remarked that they could not be too careful, and went to the door to inspect

the cause of some new uproar without. As Berkley was unfolding my credentials, I attempted to pass him unnoticed, but in vain ; I was seen.

“Miss Renshawe, where have you been?”

I said I had been taking a short walk in the woods.

“I want you to keep within doors.”

The tone was one of severity. I answered submissively that I would obey, and went above-stairs. At the first circle of the spiral flight, I stopped, wondering whether I ought not to say something to him about the innocence of the sentinel, when Berkley signaled a soldier going through the hall, and said to him :

“Who was it that I sent out in search of that young lady just now?”

“One of Good’s men, sir. I don’t know his name.”

“Find him, and send him to me in the basement.”

I had already half formed a resolve to disclose to Berkley my recent meeting with Elisha, had hesitated in the fear of imperiling the safety of the zouave, and had thought it well to take time for consideration. But it was now too late for that measure, had I decided on it, as Berkley was investigating matters for himself, and probably would not value any gratuitous information on my part. Besides, I concluded it was not my duty to give it, and should he send for me I would adhere in a general way to the statement that I had abided by the terms of my parole, without revealing the recent presence of a scout at the camp.

But no summons came. I was quite alone for what remained of daylight, and through the atmosphere, that seemed to smoke with the unusual drought, watched the shadow of the low mountains on the river’s eastern bank rounding up toward the north upon the waters, and amused myself in fixing the angle it would reach before its disappearance in the darkness.

Night came at last; I saw the sun go down among the pines, and the shadows, all the shadows descended sombre and heavy on the hills, with their vast forests and the plains lying on the southern slope, so dreary in their desolation. The sheeted cannons below the window were scarcely visible in the gloom, and nothing was distinguishable aside from the movements of the horses, the gleam of the dim lights about the courtyard, and the clang of a gate with the return or exit of a scout.

"I want you to keep within doors."

I uttered these words aloud, only to rid my mind of them, for they had formed the undertide of my thoughts since they were spoken. Such a needless rebuke, and I had not deserved it. Whose fault was it that I knew the pass-word?

A knocking at the door of the room had been protracted for some time, before it attracted my attention. Mrs. Deschapples was there.

"All dark—and the door fast. I thought I heard you talking?"

"Only to myself, and only one sentence."

"Well, my dear, I would not advise you to talk much to yourself on these premises, especially if sad thoughts are predominant."

"You seem sad yourself," I remarked.

"I frankly confess, my dear Miss Renshawe, that no one here is in good spirits to-night. We have expected Colonel Berkley's regiment to-day, in charge of Major Davis, and it has not come. My uncle is deeply troubled, for though we are many miles from the enemy, still dangers *may* surround us too suddenly to be averted. This place is held only by one company of men, and a small force under Captain Good lately deserted from the enemy."

After a little discussion of the delinquent reinforce-

ments, Mrs. Deschapples informed me that she and I were the only ladies remaining in the house, all the emissaries having gone during the day.

"My uncle wants us to join him at supper," proceeded my companion, "and I have come for you."

"You must be mistaken," said I, quite astonished. "I think I am the last person under this roof whom Governor Chives would be at all likely to invite."

"He said explicitly, 'ask Miss Renshawe to do me that honor'—there was no mistake, my dear, I assure you."

I experienced quite a sensation of relief; but was still a little dubious of my reception, and did not cease to wonder at the meaning of the invitation, while following Mrs. Deschapples through a labyrinth of muskets in the hall, to the room below, in which I had sat among the transient company of females the evening before. There was a small table set with covers for four. Chives was awaiting us. One attendant stood a little back.

"You are Alice Ludlow's cousin," said the governor, stopping me at the door. I acknowledged the relationship. "So Alice told my niece this morning."

"Does that fact weigh in my favor?" I asked.

"Certainly—the blackest abolitionist that Satan ever dyed, would look a little whiter for it. There's a truce between us, Miss Renshawe. I won't answer for anybody else, but we'll waive the cannons and the exploit at Blue Hills, as far as we are concerned." During this speech the governor had gathered up my hand, and led me across the room, where I was bidden to take my place opposite Mrs. Deschapples, while he seated himself at the head of the table; which was spread with a frugal repast of cold meat, stale bread and melons. After these few words of welcome, Chives's brow grew very overcast again, and seemingly he forgot all about me. One place was still vacant.

"Stop, Dan," no more coals on that fire—put up a screen, and then call Colonel Berkley. He'll come; he's had no dinner."

The doors were closed on the colonel's appearance. We were a very quiet party. Berkley was more pre-occupied than I had ever known him. He finished his supper nearly as soon as the rest had begun,—from which, as it consisted of two or three morsels, I judged his mind was suffering under some unusual weight; in answer to Mrs. Deschapples's inquiries, said that he was quite well but not hungry, and devoted himself to the New York papers, that had been brought in. Chives, who sat opposite his colleague, looked gloomy as the grave.

Mrs. Deschapples made an inquiry that had occurred several times to me. "Uncle, what would you do if the enemy came?"

"Ask Colonel Berkley," said Chives, drily. "Berkley, what would you do, in God's name?"

"Fortify."

Chives uttered an impatient ejaculation.

"What *could* be done, uncle?" demanded his niece.

"Nothing, child, nothing—we are unprotected."

After this declaration of defencelessness, there was another long pause. Chives cut across three melons, which Dan carried away successively—a fourth was quartered and distributed. Chives looked up from under his clouded brows, and spoke at last.

"When was the last scout in from Massanoonga, Berkley?"

"At seven o'clock."

"And no one from Coal River Marshes, yet?"

"No."

Some more silence, during which Chives gave occasional intimation of his uneasiness, by a shake of the head and low-toned surmises. It was not long before he spoke again.

"Something's the matter at Coal River Marshes, Berkley. Adams is always on time. Haven't heard from there since sunset, have we?"

"No."

"Why don't you station some one nearer to us," said Mrs. Deschapples, "to provide for a surprise."

"Lord bless you, child," said her uncle, "some one been stationed this hour; all we could spare, eh Berkley?"

"Whipplestaff is down at Mount Boon with a corporal's guard," replied the colonel. "He reports every ten minutes."

"Why didn't you send Good?" asked the governor.

"Can't trust him."

"Well, you're right; he's an infernal Yankee," Chives responded.

Again we were a silent quartette. A soldier stopped at the open door. Chives showed of what he had been thinking, by exclaiming : "Here he is now."

"Well, Adams?" said Berkley.

"All right." Adams reported nothing stirring at Coal River Marshes—the village was peaceful. He had been delayed by a bridge, and was once lost in the woods. After this ample explanation had been given, Adams was dismissed to his own supper below.

The air of uneasiness disappeared from the face of the party. Chives and his niece conversed on different topics, and Berkley still leaned over the newspapers silent and motionless.

It was eight o'clock, as Mrs. Deschapples had just announced to the company, when the door was suddenly opened by one of the soldiers.

"Colonel Berkley," said he, "there's a lady below insists on seeing you. She has ridden all the way from Massanoonga, and her horse is nearly killed."

Before any one could stir or speak, there came a sudden

rush along the hall, and a lady in a long riding habit, bedraggled with mud, dashed into the room; throwing back the veil from her black crape cap, and revealing a face deadly pale with excitement.

“Colonel Berkley—Colonel Berkley—gentlemen,” she gasped, “you are all betrayed. A Federal force is on the way from Massanoonga, to take Port Evelyn to-night.

It was Mrs. Lionel Hervey.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

COLONEL BERKLEY directed the soldier to close the door—then he assisted Mrs. Hervey to a chair, just vacated at the table. Mrs. Deschapples removed the veil from her ghastly face, while Chives groped among the decanters at the table, pouring wine with one hand and water with the other.

“Oh Lord!” groaned he, “I thought this would be the end of it. I’ve been expecting it all day. I told you so, Berkley, I told you of it.”

Berkley was giving some undertoned directions to the soldiers, among which I distinguished: “Take the horse saddled under the walnut tree by the howitzers, ride to Mount Boon, and tell Captain Whipplestaff to go down to the river and wait. I’ll send a boat for him, and say to Gedney to get ready horses for six.”

The soldier went out, and Chives went on: “I told you of it; I warned you. Now then, young man, it’s your time to fortify.”

“Fortify,” cried Mrs. Hervey, “you can’t.” She started up excitedly. “You must not dream of defence. You can but just escape with your lives—*your life*.” And she looked up at Berkley with an air, that made this appeal quite particular.

"Life!" echoed Berkley, "Nonsense! what's my life compared to all this ammunition?" He walked off.

"Exactly," said Chives; "what a haul for them; all these field-pieces. When did you leave Massanoonga, Mrs. Hervey?"

"About one hour since. For Heaven's, sake don't stop to ask me questions now. That troop of soldiers cannot be more than one hour later."

"How many strong?"

"I do not know, but they think you have a thousand men here, and say they have enough to capture all."

"We might have held the place against a legion. Berkley, go up to the roof, and see if Davis is coming. Blast Davis!—he's a traitor."

"No matter about that, my dear uncle," said Mrs. Deschapples, "Mrs. Hervey tells you you have no time for that. Leave the ammunition and make your escape!"

"Eight miles," said Chives reflectively, "nearer nine. Berkley, where the devil has he gone! Oh there you are; Lord help us! studying a chart! Lord he's gone crazy. What the deuce is he doing now—BERKLEY!"

Berkley had just opened the window, looked out, and turned back to the company at this appeal.

"I was trying to find out which way the wind is. Did you notice, Mr. Hervey?"

"In my face all the way."

"You came through the woods?"

"I did."

"Eight miles," Chives repeated, as the colonel disappeared, "and a slow march across the hills in the dark. They won't get here in two hours from now, granting they left Massanoonga when you did. Well, we must get ready for them in some way—do all we can with an untenable post. What do you want here. Scott?"

"I came to tell Colonel Berkley the horses were ready?"

"Colonel Berkley! He's not here. Gone out to see which way the wind is, I suppose. You may look for him at the weathercock."

Berkley came in. "All in the saddle, Scott;" and he took his overcoat from the wall.

"So, colonel, you've made up your mind to run," said Chives.

"Run?"

"Certainly; nothing for us to do on the face of God's footstool but run. I'm going to run and take the ladies, and you're going first, it seems."

"Now, then, governor," said Berkley, heedless of this reflection, "I beg you'll get all the powder into the southern quarter of the building. Have all the doors and windows boarded immediately. Good-evening"——

Chives stopped him at the door. "For heaven's sake don't detain me. I'm going down to fire the woods. That's all I can do. Exert yourself here at once. Time presses."

He ran down the stairway. Chives moved like a man just awake. "Come, all hands! the windows!"

His voice died away on the stairs below, and for the next hour kegs and barrels were thundering along below in every direction.

By ten o'clock all the hills north of Post Evelyn were enveloped in a mass of living flame.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WE sat on the roof and watched it—Mrs. Deschapples, Mrs. Hervey, and I. A blazing column shot up first through the woods opposite the road to

Massanoonga. Another lurid line rose in the direction of Mount Boon, and a third cut off the avenue to Coal River Marshes. Flames appeared at intervals towards the west, and those before us shortly spread and ran together.

The spectacle was one of surpassing grandeur. The roar of the fire was like steady thunder on the hills, and the ascending sheet enveloped them from base to summit, rising, falling, sinking, leaping, and whirling in huge tongues and wreaths before the wind, overtopped by a dense volume of smoke, rolling up into the immensity of a dense, black ocean.

We were joined at midnight by Captain Whipplestaff. Mrs. Hervey's admiration up to this time had been of the absorbing nature that does not admit much conversation, but on this new occasion she remarked that it was a splendid fire.

"You wouldn't considah it quite so spwendid if you wah on the othah side of it," said Whipplestaff. "I nevah was so fwightened in all my life. I got down by the wivah, and we all in the boat, and the hawth swimming, and the smoke was so thick we were neahly suffocated."

"Did you see anything of the enemy?"

"Couldn't see anything in the smoke. Besides that, the hawth upset us, and we were all dwenched; but when we got home we had suppah. Had a suppah of shad. Vewy nice, shad is, when a man's hungwy. Suppose this fiah will burn up all the shad in the wivah."

"Where is Colonel Berkley?" asked Mrs. Deschapples.

"I don't know. The last time I saw him, he was uncawking a bottle of wine. Oh, he's with the govah-nah."

"I should think he would want to look at the fire," said Mrs. Hervey.

"Well, they're vewy busy, to-night. There's a messen-

gah from Major Davis. We've seen fiahs out on the pwaiwies and in the backwoods. One gets tiashed of fiahs in the cwearhwings. Deah me, I saw fiah enough in the boat, and smoke too. Theah's a spy among us somewheahs. Good says communication was held to-day in the woods with the enemy."

"He ought to mention that to the Colonel," Mrs. Deschapples exclaimed.

"I mentioned it to the colonel," said Captain Whipplestaff, while we weah at suppah, and it seems the colonel knew it. He told me to keep still about it, and told Good, too, for it seems he doesn't want the govahnah to heah about it till he has thowoughly investigated the mattah. The enemy are nicely fixed. There's a gwheat wivah each side of them now. No boats, and the bwidges all burnt. They cant cwoss, and a fiah that they can't appwoach, unless they ah salamandahs. It will deway them, you see, and deway is all we want."

I was not a little alarmed by that division of Captain Whipplestaff's remarks relating to the spy, and brooded over them so studiously that I did not notice the governor's arrival on the roof, until he stood close at my side. But Chives was too full of anxieties about the wind to think of anything else. He went to the turn beyond the tower every minute, to consult the weathercock, in constant dread lest the wind would change, and in that case the smoke would be too intolerable for a soul to remain in the place.

"We can cwose up the windahs," Whipplestaff suggested, "and the daws; then we can bwathe the aih in the house a while. But it won't happen all at once, govahnah. Wind won't change wight wound, this way, without a warning, will it?"

"It does occasionally," said the governor. "Whirls straight about to the opposite side of the compass. But

Colonel Berkley may have some charm against the smoke for aught I know."

Mrs. Deschapples had been in the meantime informing me aside what an intriguing, unprincipled woman Mrs. Hervey was, but she should find herself circumvented. Mrs. Deschapples would take care that Berkley should not speak to her that night."

I was rather inclined to sympathize. The flames raged on unsubdued in intensity. The same hot air visited my face, the same glaring light threw its feverish hue over the countenances of the company.

"Heigho, Berkley," said the governor, as that gentleman issued from the watch-tower. "You're come at last to glance at the fire-works."

Berkley had stopped to exchange a word with Mrs. Hervey. The governor renewed his congratulations. Providence had saved the ammunition, for if the wind had not been right, and the trees had not been rainless and dewless for so many days, the arsenal would have been in the hands of the enemy.

"Sooner than that," rejoined Berkley, "I would have blown the house up, and myself with it."

"Suicide," said Mrs. Hervey, gently.

"Self-immolation is not always suicide," rejoined the rebel officer.

"And when self-immolation is *not* suicide," said Mrs. Deschapples, "which means when one dares death, or meets it for a principle, it deserves immortality."

The ill-fated commander of the Westfield had not yet accomplished *his* self-immolation at Galveston, or I might have told Colonel Berkley that it rested with a Penshawe so to immortalize an already honorable name.

Mrs. Deschapples had gone off with Colonel Berkley in triumph of soul, as I needed little skill to divine. I saw them walking up and down together on the opposite bat-

lements, and looked after them with undefined satisfaction. Mrs. Hervey scarcely turned her head in that direction, and appeared serene and untroubled. But my own soul was in a state of great perturbation. Berkley had not spoken to me when I joined the party on the housetop. After the first distant bow, he had not even looked at me, and to my great chagrin, I recalled the last words he had addressed to me in his peremptory mandate the previous afternoon. Was it accidental, this behavior, or was it the result of distrust and contempt?

The sound of the horn called me to myself. Captain Whipplestaff was announcing to Mrs. Hervey that the sun was up, and would shortly be visible over the hill.

The sun was up. It dimmed the flames rolling down on the hills, and relieved their lurid glare by the unmistakable light of day. I had taken refuge at one of the windows of the hall. There was a horseman at the gates who looked tired and travel-soiled, and who did not gain admittance until after considerable parley. He had ridden into the outer yard, dismounted, and actually reached the hall door, before I recognized Captain Walby. It was too late to retreat, and I awaited his next move in absolute consternation. Captain Walby stopped short as he saw me, but a suspicious lifting of the eye-brows, and caress of the sword-hilt, was the only recognition.

"Where's Colonel Berkley?" he said to Good, who was in the hall.

"On the top of the house, sir. Go straight up stairs to the watch-tower, and you'll come out on the roof." Walby waited no further direction, but darted up the staircase rapidly. The battlements were in full view from the stand I had taken. I saw Mrs. Deschapples and Berkley stopped in their promenade by the lately-arrived officer. If I could have known whether Captain Walby had yet spoken of me! perhaps he had not thought of

me again. The two gentlemen had disappeared at the watch-tower. Mrs. Deschapples came down and joined me. She said Walby had just come from Col. Hunter with some important intelligence, and that Colonel Berkley's regiment, in charge of Major Davis, would be there in the course of the morning. Colonel Berkley and Walby had gone to the Eastern drawing-room, and had sent for Governor Chives and Captain Whipplestaff.

Orders were soon promulgated. A general stir took place, and the soldiers began to lead out and harness the horses, and disentangle the wagons and gun-carriages from the courtyard. I soon saw that the business of loading was in rapid progress, and Mrs. Deschapples elucidated from one of the men all he knew about it, namely, that the commands were for the men to have everything loaded and ready to start before the breakfast hour, but when they were going the soldier could not for the life of of him tell, and where was even more beyond his knowledge.

Ignorance as to Captain Walby's course regarding me was not left to me very long. A soldier came up to us while we were inspecting the confusion of the court yard, and announced that the governor wished to see Miss Renshawe.

In the miserable wish of gaining time, though only one second, I asked where the governor was. Mrs. Deschapples bade the soldier lead the way; and in absolute agony of soul I went to the room where Mrs. Hervey had surprised us the evening before. Chives was there, Berkley, Walby and Captain Whipplestaff, seated round the table. They all looked at me like so many demons.

"Miss Renshawe," said Berkley, "will you have the kindness to state definitely why you did not telegraph from Richmond to Charleston, instead of waiting till you reached Suffolk?"

"Because," said I, "I feared arrest in Richmond as a spy."

"Were you known to the authorities in Richmond as a spy?"

"No, but the paper going to show me such had been inspected and its nature proclaimed to some persons who might mention it?"

"What persons?"

"One was Captain Walby," said I, looking not very lovingly at that gentleman.

"How was Captain Walby to endanger you when he was a prisoner in Northern hands?"

To this I could not reply..

"There was a lady with you," Berkley proceeded; "who was she?"

"Did not Captain Walby know her?" I inquired.

Captain Walby had not known her. "Then," said I, "I cannot mention her name."

I felt, the next instant, that Alice might not have objected to my revealing her identity in my present emergency. I therefore added: "It was Alice Ludlow."

Mingled incredulity and contempt were very plain on Berkley's features. Chives took out his pocket-book. "There's a photograph of Miss Ludlow. Walby, look at it, if you please."

Walby said at once that although he had scarcely looked at the lady in the carriage, he was very positive this was the likeness of another person. This method of investigation made me exceedingly indignant. Chives took up the thread of the discourse.

"What man was that you were conversing with in the woods yesterday?"

"It was a man belonging to a Northern regiment," said I; "I was out taking a walk, and met him by accident."

"He was out taking a walk too, I suppose," sneered Chives; "both out taking a walk at the same time."

"Governor Chives," said I, "I told him nothing that could injure a soul in this house!"

"You *spoke* to him," said Chives, "that's enough. What you said we won't ask you—we have hardly time to listen to the truth."

"Then you will listen," said I, "to my protest against this shameful detention. I never recognized yet your right to arrest, or to parole, or to pardon. I know, and you know it also, that you belong to a body in rebellion, whom the United States does not acknowledge as belligerent, and whose very existence it ignores."

"Oh, the deuce it does," said Chives! "that's a new doctrine, and rather a demonstrative ignorance on the part of the United States. However, we are coming at your principles, and I advise Colonel Berkley, the next time he gives a parole, to ask the prisoner's views on the subject of honor and honesty toward a body who, have no rights, because they resist a tyranny, and who, when absolutely ignored, have thrown half a million of men into arms, and convulsed not alone the United States, but all the world."

"Governor Chives," said I hotly, "the imputation you throw on my motives, and the view you take of my conduct, is too unjust to be patiently endured—I repeat, I reiterate I have injured no one here. Though I am imprisoned by pirates, I have not forgotten the weight of a promise, and have kept my promise most religiously, though it was made to a Jew. All that I said to the scout, when he remarked that few men were here, was that you would soon be reinforced. That remark conduced to your safety, Governor Chives."

"Oh, that's very fine—among our best friends and guardians, perhaps, Miss Renshawe. Colonel Berkley

has put a viper on his hearth that seems inclined to sting no one but himself, so far."

"Sting!" said I, passionately. "Will you explain yourself, sir?"

"Colonel Berkley," Chives continued, "has interceded for you, paroled you, and protected you to his own inconvenience. You retort by calling him a pirate and a Jew. If I had received such treatment as that, I should think I was stung."

This representation, given with the effect that characterized the governor's lightest appeals, created some compunction. I turned to the power he alluded to, and said, with a faltering voice, "Colonel Berkley, you cannot think me so ungrateful and dishonorable as to betray"—Berkley's look of careless contempt cut me to the very soul.

"You may retire," he said. I moved to obey, but before reaching the door lost self-government entirely, and turned suddenly back, while the blood rushed tumultuously into my face.

"Colonel George Berkley," I said, "do you dare to command me? Command your own slaves, if you will, but there is no law in heaven or earth that makes you *my* master."

Chives was laughing. In fact, they all were. "Come, Miss Renshawe, have done with this tempest in a teapot," said the governor.

"Gentlemen here, Miss Renshawe," said the superb Captain Walby, "are too happy to *receive* commands from ladies."

As I left the room my departure was followed by a roar of laughter. "Lord! that girl's rich!" exclaimed the governor. "Ha! ha! Walby, give me Swift's dispatch."

CHAPTER XXVI.

COMPOSURE was very shortly gained, and to await the next developments in my favor or against me, I had sought the most retired quarter of the house below. This was on the piazza running on the inside of a hollow square formed by the eastern wings of the house. From this point I had a full view of the basements, cool, shaded apartments, set with long tables appertaining to the original furniture of the house, and too useful to be devoted to the general destruction. Matters there went on regardless of all that was transacting above and without. The negroes, busied with their own affairs, cared nothing for the danger of the situation, for all the bustle in the court-yard, where the soldiers were busily executing their latest received orders; and the fire raging at the north, which was quite an old story.

Orion, one of the negroes flourishing in the establishment, had been busy for some time at one of the windows with a cap full of blue and yellow tobacco wrappers, which he was slitting at one end after the fashion of motto-papers.

"Dan," he said to that fellow-servant who had just deposited on the window sill a board on which were several tin cups full of coffee, "did you see that young cul-lud pusson dat opens de gate fur de grocer's cart across de way?"

"No, didn't see her," Dan rejoined.

"I'm a-makin' a bokkay for her," Orion announced.

"Dat yer bokkay?" said Dan, regarding the tobacco papers with a look of contempt. "Why don't you guv her good, live flowers?"

"'Kase I can't git 'em, nigger, dat's de reason," quoth

Orion. He rolled up the papers together so as to present a variegated effulgence at the top, and secured them by a pin. As he held it up admiringly, Dan reached over and struck at the head of it.

"Now, tell you what 'tis, nigger, ef ye do dat agin' I'll hit you long side ob yer head." Dan instantly made a second dash at the bouquet, and Orion retorted by throwing down the board of coffee from the window-sill. A general scuffle ensued, and the other negroes came about in crowds to look on, setting on the combatants by cheers and encouraging plaudits. The uproar soon grew considerable, the combatants yelled at the top of their voices, and I was becoming quite alarmed at the violence of the scene, when a voice was raised to quell it.

"What's going on, down there?" Chives had come out on the balcony opposite me, paper in one hand, and eye-glasses in the other. He had to pound on the balustrade before he could call attention. Exclamations of "dar's de guv'nor!" instantly quelled the disturbance. Several voices volunteered explanations.

"Couple of Cunnel Berkley's niggers got a-fightin' down here, massa."

"Tie them up, then," said Chives. "Tie them both up with the same rope. Don't let me hear such a devilish noise again."

These orders were executed with high glee by the negroes in the basement. Dan was soon secured to one window, and Orion to the other. This arrangement separated them only physically; a war of words soon commenced, and was carried on with such vehemence that Orion was finally removed to the outside of the building, and tied up just outside of the trial-chamber, of which change I became cognizant by seeing him lying asleep in the battered piano-case, at which the horses had just been fed.

Captain Whipplestaff soon joined me on the piazza with a beverage in a tin cup, which he offered to me as a "gwass of egg-nogg." I declined, and the officer placed it on the balustrade, and sat down to sip it at his leisure.

"I thought you might have come to announce my sentence, Captain Whipplestaff," said I.

"Don't know what it is yet," replied the young man. "I'm exceedingly sawy for you, Miss Wenshawe. I sympathize with you pwofoundly, and indeed I told them up staihahs that I bewieved ewewy woahd you said."

"It was very kind in you, Captain Whipplestaff, to defend me, especially as I know Captain Walby is so bitter against me as to overrule all that can be said in my favor."

"Walby is not so bittah as Berkley, Miss Wenshawe. I never knew Berkley so seveah on a thing in my wife. He bewieves ewewything against you now, and he will nevah get ovah it—nevah. I would not tell you all he said; it wouldn't be pw easant. He said I made an ath of myself, when I told him I bewieved you. He's busy now about the expwosion."

"What explosion?"

"Going to bwow up this house."

"This house!" I started so violently as to send the tin cup and its contents quite over the balcony.

"Deah me, Miss Wenshawe; spilt all my egg-nogg," said he. "What is the mattah?"

"Why, you say the house is to be blown up."

"So it is, but not till after bwakfast. It's too bad you can't take an announcement quietly. Theah's not anothah egg in the estabwishment."

I apologized for the accident, and demanded the reason for the explosion.

"I don't know. But you shouldn't say expwosion so woud. We don't want it to get awound the house. The

pooah cweatnaahs might as well enjoy theiah wepast in twanquillity."

"Why!" I exclaimed, "I hope Colonel Berkley does not intend to destroy the people with the house!"

"Why, of cawth not; but you see if it's told wight away, theah'll be twemendous confusion. I expect to see you all packed up, with your hat on, sitting out on the hills thwee houahs bifoah we have stirred."

Comparative quiet ensued during the breakfast hour. I was not sorry at the prospect of removal, though where we were to go next, I had no idea. Perhaps that night would see me farther away from home, the goal I longed so earnestly to reach. I had no doubt that my parole would be recalled shortly, and I placed again under guard; but at all events it was my place now to be a passive actor, and await, in all the calmness I was mistress of, the development of the mystery always surrounding the "next thing."

Something was in motion on the far plains south of Fort Evelyn, and by the excitement produced by the discovery, I soon learned that soldiers were approaching, for in the cloud of dust my unpractised eyes could not have distinguished by what it was raised. A rash, wild hope had risen at first, that it might be the Union troops from Massanoonga, after a successful circumvention of the barriers presented by river and land, and that rescue was at hand for me, and capture for my enemies. As the banners revealed themselves, however, I saw that this hope was groundless, and the insignia of the Confederate States was hailed from the mansion by shouts of triumph resounding through its solid arches. With unspeakable chagrin, I watched them come, but not another clouded brow was visible in the expectant crowd gathered below the flag that floated over the steps of the building.

That next hour was a busy one. More wagons and

carts had been brought by the regiment, and they were loaded as fast as hands could accomplish it with kegs and cannon balls, and piles of musketry, carried from the building.

At twelve o'clock, a blast from a trumpet gave the signal for all that was alive to quit the courtyard. The wagons and gun-carriages formed a long line moving on the southward road; a crowd of negroes following, and the gates lined with a steady out-coming of the soldiers.

"Are you not going to lead off the horses belonging to the staff?" asked Mrs. Deschapples of Whipplestaff.

"Oh, no—those hawses won't feah the noise. I've seen cannon balls fiahed cwise to theah eahs, and they never twembled a haiah."

"I wish they'd set it off soon," said one of the officers. "I don't care to stand here all day, just for the sake of seeing the fun."

Intimations were given that the "fun" was not to be longer delayed. The hills enveloped in smoke, presented a background to the North, and a dead calm reigned on the face of the crowd, all collected on the knoll.

"No one in the house?" asked the governor.

"No sir," replied a young officer, the last to quit the building, "we have just been through it."

"Niggers all out?"

"Yes sir."

"It's all right, eh Berkley?"

Berkley ran his eye over the company. "Where's Orion?"

"Gone down with the cannons," said Captain Whipplestaff; "I saw him with all the niggers."

"And Dan?"

Dan presented himself among the crowd.

"Light the fuse," said Chives.

The fuse divided in the middle of the court-yard into

three forks, running under the hall and the east and west wings of the building. Several sheafs of straw had been made ready to conduct the flames. Two soldiers went up and lit the pile lying by the fallen gates.

Safe as was the distance, there was a general movement a little farther back on the knoll. Not one of the officers had mounted. Trembling so that I could scarcely stand, I looked up at the arches and towers of that old stone house—it would be a fearful shock—a deafening explosion; falling on ears, and jarring windows miles and miles away.

Good Heavens! there was life still about the doomed building! The piano-case moved, and a great, stalwart negro rose sleepily therefrom. Orion! Exclamations of horror rose on the hill.

“Orion,” called Berkley, “come away, for God’s sake! You’ll be blown sky-high!”

“He’s tied! he’s tied!” echoed from several voices.

Orion looked at the flame that ran across the court-yard, and took in the situation. He struggled fearfully with the ropes, rushing to their full length, throwing himself around till they wound about him like an anaconda’s coil, but they would not break. The muscles on his neck swelled amid his frantic plunges, blood gushed from his nose and mouth, and the sweat streamed from his face. Those cords were like cables. The flame had disappeared within two doors of the building, and was leaping upon the threshold of a third!

“Hold my horse, Dan,” said Berkley.

I turned away from the awful sight. Redoubled cries ascended; the governor’s voice rang out, “Oh, my God! you have killed yourself! What are you doing?”

Was it all a hideous dream, and I just awaking? No; there stood the house, there the flame; and Colonel Berkley had gone across the court-yard, and was severing,

one by one, with his sword, the ropes that bound the negro to the house. Smoke was issuing already from the windows ; it came denser and denser.

"Take me away from this, Walby," groaned Chives ; "lead me away ; I cannot stand it."

The negro was loosed, but he clung to Berkley's waist with a frenzied grasp. I saw the sword lifted above his head, accompanied by some indistinguishable threat.

"Kill him!" called Chives ; "kill him, and come away!"

A tremendous explosion shook the earth, and filled the air with flying missiles. The western wing of the building lay crashing and tumbling in its own ruin. As the smoke rolled away, Berkley and Orion issued together from its cloudy columns. As they gained the hill where our party stood, a second and a third explosion racked the earth, and filled the arching dome above with its echoes. The building shook, tottered, fell, amid another rush of smoke and dust, and the court-yard was covered with a mass of fallen arches, broken columns, and rolling stones—all a blazing ruin, exhaling a mephitic steam.

"Now, then," said Chives, "the sooner we get off from this place the better. Dan, bring up the horses."

Nearly all the officers had mounted ; one after another they had ridden leisurely away. I saw Mrs. Deschapples also on horseback, moving off with the rest. It was getting quite distressing. I was still on parole, of course ; but how could I keep it if I had no horse ? A small knot of gentlemen were still on the knoll. I called to Dan, who was passing, and bade him ask Colonel Berkley if he had forgotten Miss Renshawe.

Dan came back with the report that his master had said no, and added the startling information that the gentlemen were talking about me. Dan led up the last pair of horses to the knoll where they stood, but no one moved. It was an earnest consultation. My heart grew

sick as I watched them. Berkley at last detached himself from the group, and came across the ground to me. I trembled in view of the coming announcement, and as Berkley reached me, said a little hastily to ward it off :

“I have been waiting for the horse.”

“What horse?”

“Am I expected to follow this procession on foot?”

Berkley had taken out a black pocket-book, and was too busy looking through it to heed the question. He took out and unfolded a paper. It was the certificate of my supposed espionage.

“Was my sentence decided on by you and your fellow judges?” I asked, with some bitter feelings at my heart.

“Yes,” said Berkley ; “it relieves me of the charge of your safety, which has been on my conscience for the last two or three days. I return you this paper, handed me yesterday by the governor. You are at liberty.”

“At liberty!” said I, astonished beyond measure at this, the very last announcement for which my soul had been prepared. “By whose authority?”

“By mine.”

He offered the paper, but I did not take it yet.

“Then you do believe me innocent,” said I. “Do all the gentlemen coincide in that opinion?”

“I advise you to lose no time in gathering opinions,” said the colonel, in a distant tone, that cut me to the very soul.

Captain Whipplestaff had not exaggerated.

“Colonel Berkley,” said I, in a faltering voice, “if you or those gentlemen think I could do them any injury, they are greatly mistaken.”

“We don’t *think* anything about it,” said Berkley ; “we know that you have already done us all the injury that lay in your power.”

“Colonel Berkley,” I persisted, earnestly, “do you not feel in your heart that this judgment is too severe? Are

you not sensible that circumstances sometimes weigh strongly against the innocent? May not this be one of those cases? and do you give me my liberty," I went on, stepping eagerly forward, "thinking me so mean and unscrupulous as to break a parole? I did *not*, and I am no spy. Only say you believe me, Colonel Berkley, and no words will express my gratitude."

Berkley drew in his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows—both movements so slight as to be hardly perceptible. I was answered. He added with a quickness of tone that sufficiently indicated his impatience :

"Here is this paper, Miss Renshawe. If I can serve you in any other way, you have only to say so."

I crushed the paper in my hands, and threw it on the ground.

"The only way in which you can serve me now," I said, "is to forget my existence as soon as possible. I asked for your faith and you refused it. Now I ask not even justice. You shall never see my face again."

"Amen!" said Berkley, hastily.

There was a deferential bow, to which I did not respond, by word or movement, and he walked off to join the group that were slowly moving down the road.

The sound of wheels and hoofs from the retreating caravan had quite died away; the last group had disappeared among the trees, when Orion came up with one of the horses. His master had sent down that horse for Miss Renshawe.

"Take him back," said I.

The answer was too imperious to be disputed. Orion got on the horse and galloped off.

People from the village were coming up to gaze at the ruin, and to avoid scrutinizing eyes, I went farther along the highway, and sat down at a well by the roadside. To the southward lay the desolated country; before me

the blasted ruin, and beyond, the dreary waste of smoky mountains.

An hour had passed, and I was engrossed with my own gloomy thoughts, watching the crowds that gathered round the fallen house, when a sound of hoofs attracted my attention. Captain Whipplestaff was coming up on horseback, conducting a second charger by the bridle.

"Miss Wenshawe," said he, "Colonel Berkley has sent me down with this hawse to you, and he weally insists that you won't wefuse "

"I can accept no favor at Colonel Berkley's hands," said I.

"Well, I must say, youah extwemely foolish," said the captain. "He's the best fwend you have."

"Captain Whipplestaff, you yourself told me that Colonel Berkley was my enemy, and his conduct has justified it."

"I did not say he was youah enemy. I said he bewieved you weah his; and as for what you say of his conduct, you must weally be a little just to the colonel. Don't you know he might be cawtmahtialed and shot for letting you go this mawning."

"Impossible."

"Certainly. You don't suppose it's the custom heah, do you, to turn spies and pwisoners woose on the countwy. We all wemonstwated; the govahnah and Walby said they'd put you on a hawse with a guahd each side of you, and send you to Wichmond. But the colonel was obstinate. Upon my soul, Miss Wenshawe, as much as I sympathize with you, I would not ventuah to do as the colonel has. The govahnah told him he would wepent it, and the colonel said he wished he weah as suah of being a genewal as that you would nevah injuah us again."

"Indeed," said I, quite amazed. "But he does think I *have* injured you."

"Oh, yes, he thinks that—he's unmoved as a gwanite wock about that. Now then will you take this hawse?"

"No, Captain Whipplestaff; but tell Colonel Berkley I am very grateful for his kindness to me."

Whipplestaff expressed his regret at leaving me in such a forlorn and unprotected situation, and rode off.

I sank down unspeakably miserable. What did it matter to me that I had been set free bodily, when I was held in mental bondage?

A hand was laid on my arm; I looked up and saw Mrs. Hervey.

"Have you nowhere to go, Miss Renshawe?"

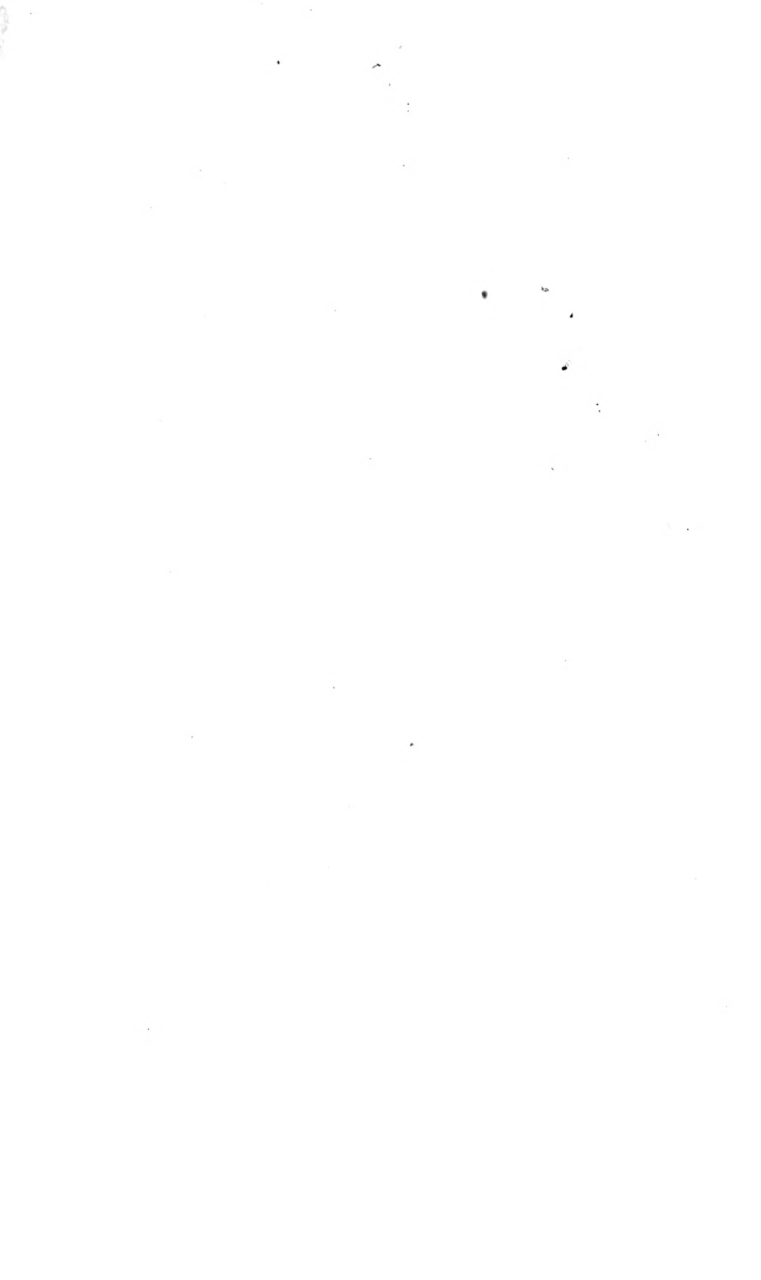
"Nowhere on the face of the earth."

"I see you have refused their aid; perhaps you will accept mine? My horses and servant are below at the river, and if you will go with me to Massanoonga you shall be a welcome guest."

I had no words in which to thank her, and was only too glad to follow.

THE END OF RENSHAWE.

IN PRESS—A continuation of this Story, entitled DELAWARE.







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